

INTERPRETATIONS OF RENAISSANCE HUMANISM

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INTERPRETATIONS OF RENAISSANCE HUMANISM

EDITED BY

ANGELO MAZZOCCO



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IN MEMORIAM

HANS BARON (1900–1988)
PAUL OSKAR KRISTELLER (1905–1999)
EUGENIO GARIN (1909–2004)

CONTENTS

Preface	ix
Contributors	xi
Introduction	1
Angelo Mazzocco	

PART ONE

Kristeller's Humanists as Heirs of the Medieval <i>Dictatores</i>	21
Ronald G. Witt	
The Origins of Humanism	37
Robert Black	
Humanism: Ancient Learning, Criticism, Schools and Universities	73
Paul F. Grendler	
Curial Humanism Seen Through the Prism of the Papal Library	97
Massimo Miglio	
Humanism and the Medieval Encyclopedic Tradition	113
Giuseppe Mazzotta	

PART TWO

Humanism and Scholasticism: Toward an Historical Definition	127
Riccardo Fubini	
Religion and the Modernity of Renaissance Humanism	137
James Hankins	

Rethinking “Christian Humanism”	155
Charles G. Nauert	
Renaissance Humanism: the Rhetorical Turn	181
Eckhard Kessler	
Literary Humanism in the Renaissance	199
Arthur F. Kinney	

PART THREE

Petrarch: Founder of Renaissance Humanism?	215
Angelo Mazzocco	
Angelo Poliziano, Aldo Manuzio, Theodore Gaza, George of Trebizond, and Chapter 90 of the <i>Miscellaneorum Centuria</i> <i>Prima</i> (With an Edition and Translation)	243
John Monfasani	
Reinterpreting Renaissance Humanism: Marcello Adriani and the Recovery of Lucretius	267
Alison Brown	
Bibliography	293
Index	315

PREFACE

My research and teaching of Renaissance humanism led me to the conclusion that, as in past years so too in contemporary time, this pivotal cultural movement is the subject of much controversy. Present-day scholars' views of humanistic culture are diverse and often contradictory. To gain an understanding of the state of current scholarship on humanism, I decided to organize a series of panels on this subject at the Toronto (2003) and New York (2004) Annual Meetings of the Renaissance Society of America. There were six panels with a total of fifteen participants. The speakers who took part in these panels (some of the leading scholars in the area of humanistic studies in both Europe and North America) were asked to give their own interpretations of Renaissance humanism. In the spirit of the great *disputationes* of the Quattrocento, they read papers that were thought-provoking and erudite and that often engendered lively and vigorous discussions. Twelve enlarged and, at times, rewritten, versions of these papers plus a study of my own on Petrarch, which was not part of the RSA panels, but which functioned as a catalyst for the conceptualization of this project, are now included in this volume. While formulating their views of Renaissance humanism, the authors of these studies pay close attention to the scholarship of Hans Baron, Eugenio Garin, and Paul Oskar Kristeller, who, as we shall see later, were the preeminent Renaissance scholars of the twentieth century. Indeed, the works of these three intellectuals, especially those of Kristeller, constitute the backdrop of much of the argumentation conveyed by the essays of this volume. So that these studies could be viewed in an historical context, I have included an introduction that treats the rich literature on the nature and evolution of humanism from the seminal works of Voigt and Burckhardt in the second half of the nineteenth century to the numerous and crucial studies of the 1950s.

Assembling these essays in a single volume has been a stimulating and enlightening enterprise. This project was made possible, in part, by a research fund from Mount Holyoke College. I would like to thank the Dean of Faculty, Donal O'Shea, for his support and encouragement. I am grateful to Riccardo Fubini, John Monfasani, and Ronald Witt for their support of this project since its inception and to all the contributors for their quick replies to my queries and recommendations. I would like to thank my colleagues Fred McGuinness at Mount Holyoke College and Arjo Vanderjagt at the University of Groningen and at Brill for participating in this undertaking

as panel chairs at the RSA meetings. At Brill, my gratitude goes to Irene van Rossum for her assistance during the initial stages of this project, and to Boris van Gool, Renee Otto, and Hylke Faber for their production advice and sensible solutions to my editorial questions. Further thanks go to Arjo Vanderjagt for his wise counsel throughout this project and for publishing the volume in his series on Intellectual History. Finally I would like to thank my wife, Elizabeth, whose computer expertise helped bring this volume to fruition and whose meticulous reading of the manuscripts caught numerous inconsistencies and infelicities.

Angelo Mazzocco
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22 April 2006

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INTRODUCTION

Angelo Mazzocco

Few cultural movements have generated more controversy than Renaissance humanism. Did Renaissance humanism constitute a clear break from the Middle Ages or was it slow in the making, originating deep in the medieval world? Was it strictly a secular movement that negated and contrasted church doctrines and policies? Was Renaissance humanism the creation of Italy alone or was it attributable also to other European countries, especially France? Was it broad in scope, encompassing all the elements of a civilization, or was it limited solely to certain aesthetic and literary qualities? Indeed, was there a clearly definable movement with characteristics of renewal to justify the name *Renaissance*? These are some of the questions raised by the many scholars who have addressed the issue of Renaissance humanism since the publication in 1859 and 1860 respectively of Georg Voigt's *The Revival of Classical Antiquity or the First Century of Humanism* and Jacob Burckhardt's *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*,¹ the works that first and most forcefully delineated the cultural boundaries and implications of this pivotal historical era. The literature on Renaissance humanism is a rich and complex one.² Here I shall limit myself to a brief synthesis of this literature from the era of Voigt and Burckhardt to the mid-twentieth century, the time when Baron, Garin, and Kristeller established themselves as the preeminent authorities in the field of Renaissance culture. To the extent, as I have noted in the Preface, that these three scholars constitute the

¹ Georg Voigt, *Die Wiederbelebung des classischen Alterthums oder das erste Jahrhundert des Humanismus* 2 vols. (Berlin, 1859, 4th ed. Berlin, 1960) and Jacob Burckhardt, *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien. Ein Versuch* (Basel, 1860).

² A still indispensable work for the scholarship on Renaissance humanism from Voigt and Burckhardt to the 1930s is Wallace K. Ferguson, *The Renaissance in Historical Thought: Five Centuries of Interpretation* (Cambridge, MA, 1948), pp. 133–397. Also quite valuable, especially for the Italian contribution, is Ugo Dotti, “Il dibattito,” in idem, *L'età dell'umanesimo* (Palermo, 1978), pp. 147–67. Charles Trinkaus gives a concise and perceptive analysis of the scholarship produced in the 1920s through the 1940s in the “Introduction” to his *The Scope of Renaissance Humanism* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1983), pp. ix–xxvii. For an important annotated bibliography of works published up to the 1940s see Eugenio Garin, “Umanesimo e Rinascimento,” in *Questioni e correnti di storia letteraria*, eds. Umberto Bosco et al. (Milan, 1949), pp. 394–404.

backdrop of the articles in this volume, the remainder of the introduction will concentrate on their interpretation of Renaissance humanism.

For Voigt the revival of antiquity in Italy constituted the *vis vitae* of Renaissance humanism in particular and of the Renaissance in general. The revival of ancient civilization generated a new system of values and attitudes that altered fundamentally the culture of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Italy. Indeed, the Italian culture of this period stood in glaring contrast to that of the medieval era. Burckhardt concurs with Voigt, holding that Renaissance humanism constituted a clear break from the Middle Ages, but he differs from him regarding the role played by the revival of antiquity. Unlike Voigt, Burckhardt does not consider the rebirth of ancient civilization fundamental to the enterprise of the Renaissance. To be sure the revival of antiquity did play a role in the molding of the Renaissance, but its role was commensurate to that of other important cultural elements, all of which had a medieval origin:

With this tendency [to return to the past] other elements—the popular character which time had now greatly modified, the political institutions imported by the Lombards from Germany, chivalry and other Northern forms of civilization, and the influence of religion and the Church—combined to produce the modern Italian spirit, which was destined to serve as the model and ideal for the whole Western world.³

Indeed, the objective of Burckhardt in *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* is to capture the spirit of the Italian people during the Renaissance era. In so doing he seeks to locate what is typical and constant in the culture of this period. It is his assertion that between the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries there emerged in Italy a distinctive culture that set the Italians apart from other peoples of the Western world, making them “the first-born among the sons of modern Europe.”⁴ The distinguishing feature of this culture was a strong individualism. The highly individualistic society of the Italian Renaissance with its predilection for the secular and its emphasis on the well-rounded person constituted a counterbalance to the backward, corporate Church of the Middle Ages and the medieval world in general.

³ Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, trans. S.G.C. Middlemore with an introduction by Peter Burke and notes by Peter Murray (London, 1990), pp. 121–22.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy dominated the late-nineteenth century view of Renaissance humanism.⁵ In fact, many a scholar of this period betrays a significant Burckhardtian influence. For example, *The Civilization* is at the base of John Addington Symonds' massive study on the Italian Renaissance and of Ludwig Geiger's interpretation of Italian humanism.⁶ The nineteenth-century Italian philosopher Bertrando Spaventa expressed views on the Renaissance analogous in many ways to those of Burckhardt. According to Spaventa, Renaissance humanism was the product of the Italian genius. It constituted the beginning of the modern era and the negation, therefore, of medieval Scholasticism with its implicit transcendentalism. In fact, humanism stood as the dialectical antithesis to medieval thought.⁷

Burckhardt's thesis was subjected to some criticism by late nineteenth-century scholars such as Emile Gebhart,⁸ but it met its first major challenge from Konrad Burdach. Addressing Burckhardt's insistence on the secularism of Renaissance humanism, Burdach argued that Italian Renaissance humanism was essentially a religious enterprise. It evolved from the spiritual renewal of the Italian people. Its agents were St. Francis, Dante, Petrarch, but

⁵ Much has been written about Burckhardt and his influence on European and American scholarship. For a cogent assessment of Burckhardt's impact on Renaissance historiography (including valuable bibliographical references) see Peter Elmer, "Inventing the Renaissance: Burckhardt as Historian," in *The Impact of Humanism*, ed. Lucille Kekewich (New Haven, 2000), pp. 1–13 and 21–22.

⁶ J.A. Symonds, *Renaissance in Italy*, 7 vols. (London, 1875–86) and Ludwig Geiger, *Renaissance und Humanismus in Italien und Deutschland* (Berlin, 1882).

⁷ Bertrando Spaventa, *Saggi di critica filosofica, politica e religiosa* (Naples, 1867). It should be noted that Spaventa's idealistic perception of Renaissance humanism was not shared by his distinguished contemporary Francesco de Sanctis, who, as an adherer to the populist and anti-classical ideology of Italian romanticism, saw Renaissance humanism as elitist and devoid, therefore, of popular traditions and culture. It thus lacked vitality and creative, energy, being totally dependent on classical models. The humanists were an immoral lot, who, by virtue of their being associated with despotic courts, sought to abolish the democratic traditions of medieval Italy with its vernacular language and culture. Francesco de Sanctis, "Lumanesimo," in *Antologia critica sugli scrittori d'Italia*, ed. Luigi Russo. 3 vols. (Florence, 1931–1933), 2:8–13 and 43. First published ca. 1870. However, Spaventa's ideas were appropriated and enriched by Giovanni Gentile. Through him they became part of fascist ideology in the 1930s. For Gentile Renaissance humanism was an exceptional, creative, and innovative movement, which affirmed the validity of worldly existence and expressed faith in the dignity of man. The individualism of this period with the self-confidence it engendered led to the elimination of medieval transcendentalism and set the stage for a new and bright era. See Giovanni Gentile, *Studi sul Rinascimento* (Florence, 1923) and "La concezione umanistica del mondo," *Nuova antologia* 277 (1931), 307–17.

⁸ Emile Gebhart, "La Renaissance italienne et la philosophie de l'histoire," *Revue des Deux Mondes* 71 (1885), 342–79.

above all Cola di Rienzo.⁹ Criticism of Burckhardt's thesis continued unabatedly in the first three decades of the twentieth century. It was challenged by the Catholic scholars who resented Burckhardt's characterization of the Church as a backward, superstitious institution that severely hampered the forces of progress. Following in some ways Burdach's line of reasoning, these scholars maintained that far from being an obstacle to progress, the Church had actually brought about the rediscovery of the individual and of the world in general. Moreover, Renaissance humanism, so argued Giuseppe Toffanin, one of the most controversial adherers to this school of thought, was neither pagan nor entirely laic. The humanists were devout Christians who challenged the heretical tendencies of the Paduan Averroists. As such they were forerunners of the Counter Reformation.¹⁰ Similarly Burckhardt's thesis was disputed by historians of science who objected vigorously to his claim that Renaissance humanism ushered in the modern era. According to these authors there was no freedom of thought or scientific inquiry during this period. Indeed, Renaissance humanism contributed nothing to scientific thought. In fact, the scholastics were better scientists than the humanists. Lynn Thorndike speculates that the "so-called Renaissance" may have experienced a significant decline in civilization in general and in scientific pursuit in particular. Rather than a cultural "renaissance," Petrarch may very well have initiated a cultural backsliding.¹¹

One of the more disputed aspects of Burckhardt's thesis has been his assertion that Renaissance humanism had a precise origin (mid-fourteenth-century Italy) and that it was strictly the product of the Italian people. It has been argued that cultural characteristics attributed to Renaissance Italy were actually present in other European countries. Moreover, classical rebirth was not unique to Italy. There had been revivals of antiquity in the Carolingian era as well as in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Indeed, many of the features of Italian Renaissance humanism were legacies of the Middle Ages. Thus, in a highly influential criticism of the alleged uniqueness of Italian Renaissance, Charles Homer Haskins agreed that there was an Italian Renaissance, but that this historical epoch was less unique and less sharp than had often been assumed: "There was an Italian Renaissance, whatever we choose to call it. . . . But. . . the Great Renaissance was not so

⁹ The nucleus of this thesis is found in K. Burdach, *Vom Mittelalter zur Reformation* (Halle, 1893).

¹⁰ Giuseppe Toffanin, *La fine dell'Umanesimo* (Turin, 1920).

¹¹ Lynn Thorndike, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, 6 vols. (New York, 1923–1941).

unique or so decisive as has been supposed. The contrast of culture was not nearly as sharp as it seemed to the humanists and their modern followers.¹² Indeed, modern research had shown the Middle Ages to be “less dark and less static, the Renaissance to be less bright and less sudden.”¹³ Prior to the “Great Renaissance” there had been other revivals (the most noteworthy being that of the twelfth century) with cultural characteristics analogous to those of fifteenth-century Italy, revivals whose influence had been felt by subsequent cultural movements: “within the Middle Ages there were intellectual revivals whose influence was not lost to succeeding times, and which partook of the same character of the better known movement of the fifteenth century.”¹⁴ This being the case, Haskins concludes that the Italian Renaissance had evolved gradually from the Middle Ages: “The Italian Renaissance . . . came out of the Middle Ages so gradually that historians are not agreed when it began, and some would go so far as to abolish the name, and even the fact of a renaissance in the Quattrocento.”¹⁵ For Johan Huizinga fourteenth- and fifteenth-century France and Flanders rivaled the Italian city-states in their artistic elegance and overall cultural production. Nevertheless, none of these cultures could be characterized as Renaissance, for they bore the imprint of an evanescent medieval mode of thinking. Consequently, they constituted the waning of the medieval era rather than the beginning of a new age.¹⁶

Not all the criticisms of the Burckhardtian thesis were as learned and discerning as those of Haskins and Huizinga. Conditioned by national bias, many interpreters of Renaissance Italy tended to accentuate the accomplishments of their own medieval culture and minimize, or even belittle, those of Italian Renaissance humanism. The Frenchman Edmond Faral, for example, argued that Latin humanism was solely the product of France and that, in fact, the Italian humanists came in contact with Roman letters through the French scholars of the twelfth century.¹⁷ An equally disparaging interpretation of Italian Renaissance humanism was provided by Johan Nordström, who maintained that the Renaissance culture of Italy was

¹² Charles Homer Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, MA, 1927), pp. 5–6.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. vii.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. viii. On Haskins cf. Ferguson, *The Renaissance in Historical Thought*, pp. 331–33.

¹⁶ Johan Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages* (London, 1924). The work was first published in Dutch in 1919.

¹⁷ Edmond Faral, *L'orientation actuelle des études relatives au latin médiéval* (Paris, 1923).

devoid of originality in that what was valuable in this culture was traceable to a general European Renaissance that had flourished north of the Alps, especially France, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. What was original in Italian Renaissance culture was usually deplorable.¹⁸

Beginning in the late 1930s and continuing in the 1950s there was a reaction to the deprecating view of Renaissance humanism that prevailed during the first third of the century. Renaissance humanism was now viewed in a more favorable light, and it was considered strictly an Italian phenomenon. This reassessment of Renaissance humanism was predicated on a sober and extensive reading of humanistic literature, a reading that encompassed the whole spectrum of the humanists' literary production from their treatises on grammar and rhetoric to their works on history, literature, and moral philosophy, and from their philological analyses of ancient texts to their reconstruction and interpretation of ancient ruins and institutions. An important figure in this group of scholars was Berthold Ullman. Recalling the polemic on Renaissance humanism we have referred to above, Ullman noted that some modern scholars had spoken of "a renaissance in the ninth century and another in the twelfth century," and that they had discovered "mediaeval shadows lurking in the Renaissance." Consequently they saw "little or no difference in the brightness of the two periods."¹⁹ Indeed, some medievalists had gone so far as to deny the very existence of Italian Renaissance humanism. The fact is, Ullman goes on to note, that, as attested to by the scholarship of Petrarch in particular, there was an Italian Renaissance humanism with distinct characteristics of renewal which set it apart from the Middle Ages: "the Italian of the fourteenth century had a mysterious something, a germ or an excess of some secretion or an imbalance of salts that caused him to behave in a different way from his predecessors."²⁰ This difference was due to the fact that Italian humanism "cancelled all medieval literature and started where the ancients left off."²¹

Some scholars of the 1940s and 1950s found the justification of Italian Renaissance humanism in the humanists' self-awareness of a classical re-birth. Thus Herbert Weisinger, a major contributor to this line of thought, wrote: "As a consequence [of reading Renaissance literature] I am led to the

¹⁸ Johan Nordström, *Medeltid och Renässans* (Stockholm, 1929).

¹⁹ Berthold L. Ullman, "Some Aspects of the Origin of Italian Humanism," *Philological Quarterly* 20 (1941), 212–23 now in his *Studies in the Italian Renaissance* (Rome, 1955), p. 27. I cite from the 1955 reprint.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

conviction that, even if we nowadays have discovered that the Renaissance was not altogether what it thought it was, the fact that it did think of itself as a Renaissance is an objective criterion of the Renaissance.”²² Still other experts saw evidence of Renaissance humanism in the many antiquarian works written by the Italian humanists, that is to say, they saw it in that facet of humanistic literature that treated Roman ruins and institutions (*Romanae antiquitates*). Renaissance antiquarianism has traditionally been maligned by modern scholarship.²³ However, in the 1940s and 1950s distinguished scholars, such as Arnaldo Momigliano, came to regard antiquarianism as an important component of humanistic literature. According to these experts, humanists from Petrarch to Biondo saw the *Romanae antiquitates* as a stimulus for the recovery of classical Roman civilization. Indeed, for the humanists, the *Romanae antiquitates*, be it the massive ancient structures standing up among the modern buildings of contemporary Rome or the proficient armies and the efficacious administrative system of ancient Rome they read about in the newly-reconstituted works of Livy, Tacitus, and Florus, possessed a strong exemplary value. Consequently they were to be used as paradigms for the re-classicizing of contemporary society. By virtue of their recovering and reconstituting Roman ruins and institutions and of their using them as paradigms for the revival of antiquity, the antiquarian works of the humanists were central to the enterprise of *renovatio*, the *vis vitae* of Renaissance humanism.²⁴

A byproduct of the reassessment of Renaissance humanism carried out in the 1940s and 1950s was the antedating of its origin from the mid-fourteenth century, the age of Petrarch, to the second half of the thirteenth century, the era that saw the flourishing of such intellectuals as Lovato dei Lovati and Geri d’Arezzo. Given that these intellectuals, as Roberto Weiss

²² Herbert Weisinger, “The Self-Awareness of the Renaissance,” *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters* 29 (1943), p. 567. See also Wallace K. Ferguson, “Humanist Views of the Renaissance,” *American Historical Review* 45 (1939), 1–28.

²³ This prejudice dates back to the nineteenth century. In fact, no less a connoisseur of cultural phenomena than Friedrich Nietzsche said the following about the antiquary: “Man (= the antiquary) envelops himself in an odour of decay; through his antiquarian habit he succeeds in degrading even a more significant talent and nobler need to an insatiable craving for novelty, or rather a craving for all things and old things; often he sinks so low as finally to be satisfied with any fare and devours with pleasure even the dust of bibliographical quisquilia.” *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life*, trans. Peter Preuss (Indianapolis, 1980), p. 21.

²⁴ Arnaldo Momigliano, “Ancient History and the Antiquarian,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 13 (1950), 285–315. See also R. Valentini and G. Zucchetti, *Codice topografico della città di Roma*, 4 vols. (Rome, 1940–1953) and Roberto Weiss, “Lineamenti per una storia degli studi antiquari in Italia,” *Rinascimento* 9 (1958), 141–201.

contents, had made use of techniques and methodologies traditionally associated with Petrarch, one could conclude that “Italian humanism was already in existence before Petrarch and Boccaccio were born.” However, unlike the humanism of Petrarch and his followers “this early humanism was not the result either of a reaction against an aspect of philosophical speculation or of a conscious desire for a ‘renovatio studiorum’ and hopes of a new golden age.” Rather “it was a spontaneous and natural development of classical studies as pursued during the later Middle Ages.”²⁵

By far the most distinguished and influential scholars of Renaissance humanism to flourish in this period (late 1930s–1950s) were Hans Baron (1900–1988), Eugenio Garin (1909–2004), and Paul Oskar Kristeller (1905–1999). Much like Burckhardt in the late nineteenth century, they have dominated the field of Renaissance humanism for much of the second half of the twentieth century. “Following Baron, Garin, and Kristeller,” Paul Grendler notes, “many historians in numerous monographs from the 1960s through the 1990s have concentrated on humanism, and the links between humanism and other areas of life.”²⁶ Like other experts of this period, they, too, felt the impact of the polemic on Italian Renaissance humanism prevalent in the early part of the century.

Baron, the oldest of the three, was born in Germany, and it was in Germany where he acquired the skills and principles fundamental to his historical writing. In fact, though his historiography was influenced in some ways by the events of the Second World War and by the scholarly trends of the United States where he lived and worked for much of his life, he nevertheless remained faithful to the historiographical practices he acquired in Germany.²⁷ Baron wrote many important studies, but the work that brought

²⁵ Roberto Weiss, *The Dawn of Humanism in Italy* (London, 1947; repr. New York, 1970), p. 21. *The Dawn of Humanism in Italy* was originally presented by Weiss as a lecture to the British Academy in 1942. For a fuller discussion of Weiss’s concept of pre-Petrarchan humanism see below pp. 216–18.

²⁶ Paul Grendler, “The Italian Renaissance in the Past Seventy Years: Humanism, Social History, and Early Modern in Anglo-American and Italian Scholarship,” in *The Italian Renaissance in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Allen J. Grieco, Michael Rocke, and Fiorella Gioffredi Superbi (Florence, 2002), p. 5. On the pivotal role of these three intellectuals in the scholarship on Renaissance humanism, see also Riccardo Fubini, *L’umanesimo italiano e i suoi storici: Origini rinascimentali-critica moderna* (Milan, 2001), pp. 25–27. On Garin and Kristeller, see also the valuable assessment by Christopher S. Celenza in his recently released book, *The Lost Italian Renaissance: Humanists, Historians, and Latin’s Legacy* (Baltimore, 2004), pp. 16–57.

²⁷ For a lucid account of Baron’s career as an historian, see Riccardo Fubini, “Renaissance Historian: The Career of Hans Baron,” *Journal of Modern History* 64 (1992), 541–74.

him the greatest recognition and that best reflects his notion of Renaissance humanism is *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance* (1955).²⁸

Baron argues in *The Crisis* that in about 1400 a dramatic turn of events occurred in the city of Florence, which caused “rapid shifts from ‘medieval’ to ‘Renaissance.’”²⁹ The catalyst of this turn of events was Florence’s confrontation (1401–1402) with Giangaleazzo Visconti, duke of Milan. The dangers posed by the Viscontean wars prompted the Florentine humanists to reassess their role as scholars and as citizens. Prior to the confrontation with Milan they had adhered to a militant classicism that led to “an atmosphere of artificiality in which the only thing that counted was imitation of the ancients.” Their obsession with classicism had caused them to scorn “Dante and all Volgare writers” and “to disdain the age and society in which they lived; they neglected their civic duties.”³⁰ The call for “fresh energies and creative adaptations” brought forth by the Viscontean wars induced the Florentine humanists to employ a more pragmatic and utilitarian interpretation of classical culture and to make the pursuit of the common good the paramount objective of one’s scholarly activities. Indeed, following the model of the ancients, the humanist “was expected to be not only a man of culture but also a better and more useful citizen.”³¹ The result of this new mode of thinking on the part of the Florentine humanists, a mode of thinking Baron designates as “civic humanism,” was a heightened communal spirit and patriotism and a close adherence to republican principles and ideals. Moreover, civic humanism brought about “the civic ethics of the *vita activa-politica*” and a “new realistic study of history and politics.”³² In other words, civic humanism rejected such medieval practices and modes of thinking as monastic withdrawal and the providential view of history. In fact, besides being a break from militant classicism, civic humanism was also a break from medieval culture. A distinguishing feature of the Florentine humanism of the Quattrocento was “the vindication of the Volgare.” Just as the ancient Romans advocated the use of their own vernacular, Latin, even though they nurtured a strong admiration and respect for the Greek language, so the modern Florentines held in high esteem their own *volgare*, the language of Dante, even though they had a high regard for and made

²⁸ Hans Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1955); rev. ed. in one vol. (Princeton, 1966). I cite from the 1966 edition.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 444.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 451.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 453–54 and 457.

³² *Ibid.*, 452.

extensive use of Latin. Of the many civic humanists who flourished in early-fifteenth-century Florence, none was more eminent than Leonardo Bruni. Indeed, Bruni was the single most important agent of Florentine civic humanism. From Florence, civic humanism eventually spread to other parts of Italy, especially Venice.

The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance was received with much enthusiasm and acclaim, being hailed as a major contribution to Renaissance studies. To be sure reservations were voiced regarding some aspects of its thesis on civic humanism. On the whole, however, it was seen as a provocative and illuminating monograph on an important facet of Renaissance humanistic culture. However, in recent years the critics have outnumbered the defenders. Most aspects of Baron's thesis have come under close scrutiny, with some of them being rejected altogether. It has been noted that many of the ideas that Baron ascribes to civic humanism are traceable to the medieval communes of Tuscany and to medieval Italian culture in general and that Bruni, far from being an agent of Florentine republicanism, was actually an apologist for an increasingly oligarchic regime.³³ Given the extensive and rigorous research conducted in the area of Florentine humanism since the publication of the *The Crisis*, one finds it difficult to accept some of the more sweeping assumptions of Baron's *magnum opus*. Nevertheless, if one goes beyond its basic premise, that is to say its supposition that Florentine civic humanism came into being suddenly in about 1400 and that it resulted from Florence's confrontation with Milan, and the conclusions that it engenders, one encounters much in *The Crisis* that is of value to the student of Renaissance humanism. A case in point is Baron's argument on the efficacy of the Florentine vernacular and on its centrality to the political and cultural life of fifteenth-century Florence.³⁴ His assumption that anything novel and praiseworthy found in the Florentine culture of this period came into being subsequent to the Viscontean wars leads him to conclude that it was Bruni who first acknowledged that the Florentine vernacular was a highly effective language. The fact is, however, that such effectiveness had already been recognized by Dante and Bruni's acknowledgment was based on Dante's line of reasoning.³⁵ Be that as it

³³ For a reappraisal of Baron's thesis with numerous bibliographical references to the literature on his historiography, see now James Hankins, ed., *Renaissance Civic Humanism: Reappraisals and Reflections* (Cambridge, 2000), especially pp. 1–13 and nn. 21–22, and Robert Black, ed., *Renaissance Thought* (London, 2001), especially pp. 1–20 and pt. 3.

³⁴ Baron, *The Crisis*, pp. 332–53.

³⁵ For a fuller account of Baron's assessment of Bruni's view of the Florentine vernacular and for a comparison of the linguistic theories of Bruni with those of Dante, see Angelo

may, the argument concerning the vernacular leads Baron to assemble a wide range of primary sources which he subjects to a careful and novel examination. His analysis of these sources sheds much light on the role of the vernacular in the humanistic culture of Florence and Italy.

Garin is much more sensitive than Baron to the polemic on Renaissance humanism that evolved during the first three decades of the twentieth century. Indeed, his argument on the origin and nature of Italian humanism is in some ways a reaction to that polemic. Bearing in mind Haskins, among others, Garin argues in his *Italian Humanism* (first published in German in 1947) that “There can be no doubt that one ought to remember that people in the middle ages read and translated the classics; that at least in some places, at certain times, they knew Greek; that they were interested in nature, and so forth.” In fact, “The better one knows the middle ages, the more clearly one recognises in their civilization the extension of antiquity. Methods of teaching as well as views and doctrines survived in various ways.”³⁶ Garin goes on to note that the presence in medieval society of numerous cultural characteristics of the ancient world had led some scholars to argue that

the first century of humanism was not the 14th and still less the 15th, and that the first age of humanism was not to be found in Italy. They insist instead that humanism began in the 13th century—or better still, in the 12th century and even earlier, in the age of Alcuin and at the court of Charlemagne.³⁷

The fact is that there was only one historically justifiable humanism, the humanism of Italy. What distinguished Italian humanism from the Middle Ages and what gave it its cultural uniqueness was its attitude toward classical civilization:

The essence of [Italian] humanism is most clearly defined by its attitude to the civilization of the past. And that attitude is not confined to an admiration or a love for antiquity, nor to a greater knowledge of antiquity, but consists rather in a well marked historical consciousness. The “barbarians” [= the medieval cultural figures] were not barbarous because they had remained ignorant of the classics, but because they had failed to understand them as a historical

Mazzocco, *Linguistic Theories in Dante and the Humanists: Studies of Language and Intellectual History in Late Medieval and Early Renaissance Italy* (Leiden, 1993), pp. 36–38.

³⁶ Eugenio Garin, *Italian Humanism: Philosophy and Civic Life in the Renaissance*, trans. Peter Munz (New York, 1965), p. 12. First published in German under the title *Der italienische Humanismus* (Bern, 1947). Garin also published an Italian version, *Lumanesimo italiano: filosofia e vita civile nel Rinascimento* (Bari, 1952). Munz’s translation is based on the Italian rendering.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 11–12.

phenomenon. The humanists, on the other hand, discovered the classics because they managed to detach themselves from them and comprehend their Latin without confusing it with their own Latin. It is for this reason that it is true to say that antiquity was discovered by the humanists, even though both Aristotle and Virgil were well known in the middle ages. It was humanism which placed Virgil back into his historical context.³⁸

The Italian humanists' ability to detach themselves from the ancient world and to view it in its historical context made it possible for them to give an interpretation of classical civilization that was historically accurate and socially viable. Thus by taking a detached view of antiquity they were able to strip the ancient text of its sacredness and *auctoritas* and to subject it to a discerning textual criticism. The ancient text was examined in the light of its historical reality. The humanists sought to understand its origin and meaning as well as the undertones and flavor of its every term. Such an exquisite method of investigation was valid for any type of research, including scientific inquiry. In fact, it was no accident that "the Renaissance was not only an age of artists, but also an age of scientists like Toscanelli and Galilei."³⁹ Similarly, by taking a detached view of antiquity, the humanists were able to comprehend the socio-political implications of the *studia humanitatis*. They learned, by examining the works of classical authors, especially Cicero's, that the *studia humanitatis* advocated the pursuit of the common good and that they fostered involvement in the civic life of one's community. Consequently humanists such as Bruni rejected "monastic withdrawal" and expressed "a Socratic devotion to his fellow-citizens."⁴⁰ They sought perfection by tending to public affairs. It is Garin's assumption that Italian humanism fashioned a new philosophy of man, which was brought about by the humanists' novel perception of the ancient world. Their "well marked historical consciousness" allowed them to place classical civilization back into its historical context. Garin has written many studies on Renaissance humanism since his publication of *Der Italianische Humanismus* in 1947. In his later works, he has extended his interpretation of Renaissance humanism to the fields of science, politics, and education, but his assumptions and criteria about humanistic culture have remained essentially the same.⁴¹

³⁸ Ibid., p. 14. On this see also Eugenio Garin, "Umanesimo e Rinascimento" (see above n. 2), pp. 349–93, especially pp. 361–68 and 371–79.

³⁹ Garin, *Italian Humanism*, p. 17.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 42.

⁴¹ For an overall view of Garin's contribution to Renaissance humanism see, E. Garin, *La filosofia come sapere storico con un saggio autobiografico* (Rome, 1990) and Renzo Cassigoli, ed., *Colloqui con Eugenio Garin: Un intellettuale del Novecento* (Florence, 2000).

Most American students of the Renaissance are in agreement that Kristeller is the foremost contributor to the scholarship of Renaissance humanism and that he sees humanism as strictly a grammatical and rhetorical enterprise with strong roots in medieval rhetoric and institutions. That Kristeller is a major contributor to Renaissance humanism there is no doubt. His contribution to this historical movement is pivotal because of his erudition and scholarly production, which are exceptional by any standard, but also because of his generosity and accessibility. He maintained an extensive correspondence with scholars worldwide, freely providing manuscript references and information on vital facets of Renaissance culture.⁴² However, whether or not he viewed Renaissance humanism as strictly a grammatical and rhetorical undertaking is a moot question. To be sure, as argued acutely by John Monfasani, Kristeller did in fact believe that Renaissance humanism was rooted in medieval rhetorical tradition and customs, and that he should have held such a belief is logical enough, given that he had a solid training in both classical and medieval rhetoric.⁴³ Moreover, that Renaissance humanism was rooted in the medieval rhetorical tradition and that it had a strong medieval intent is affirmed by Kristeller himself. In a seminal study written early in his scholarly career (“Humanism and Scholasticism in the Italian Renaissance” [1944–1945]), he argues that Renaissance humanism did not derive from classical scholarship nor did it constitute a new philosophy whose objective was to challenge Scholasticism. Rather humanism evolved out of the grammatical and rhetorical fields of the Middle Ages. In fact, the humanists “were the professional heirs and successors of the medieval rhetoricians, the so-called *dictatores*.”⁴⁴ Thus the humanists enjoyed the same social and cultural status enjoyed by the medieval *dictatores*. The humanist Coluccio Salutati, for example, “occupied the same place in the society and culture of his time as did the *dictator* Petrus de Vineis one hundred and fifty years before.”⁴⁵ But whereas Salutati had

⁴² I personally profited much from Kristeller’s counseling and support.

⁴³ John Monfasani, “Toward the Genesis of the Kristeller Thesis on Renaissance Humanism: Four Bibliographical Notes,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 53 (2000), 1156–66. Monfasani also suggests that the nature of Kristeller’s thesis and the timing of its formulation (early 1940s) may have been influenced by a spirited exchange he had with the distinguished American medievalist Richard McKeon. *Ibid.*, pp. 1163–66 and 1169–73. On the Kristeller thesis, see also Monfasani, “Humanism and Rhetoric,” in *Renaissance Humanism: Foundations, Forms, and Legacy*, ed. Albert Rabil, Jr., 1 (Philadelphia, 1988), pp. 171–235, but especially pp. 174–77.

⁴⁴ Paul O. Kristeller, “Humanism and Scholasticism in the Italian Renaissance,” in *idem, Renaissance Thought: The Classic, Scholastic, and Humanist Strains* (New York, 1961), p. 102.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 102–103.

a strong interest in the study and imitation of classical stylistic norms, the medieval *dictatores* exhibited no concern for such matters. Hence, Kristeller concludes that “the humanists did not invent a new field of learning or a new professional activity, but they introduced a new, classicist style into the traditions of medieval Italian rhetoric.”⁴⁶

Does this mean that Kristeller relegated Renaissance humanism entirely to the philological sphere (grammar, rhetoric, textual criticism, etc.)? In other words, does it mean that he continued to see Renaissance humanism as devoid of any ideological dimension (the humanists’ emulation of the Roman *virtus*, their interest in classical institutions, their admiration for the ancients’ longing for glory, etc.)? A close reading of his numerous introductions to his many books and of those articles in which he concentrates on the classical import of humanism indicates otherwise. For example, in his “The Humanist Movement,” which was conceptualized about ten years after the piece on humanism and Scholasticism (it was part of four lectures on the influence of classical studies and ancient sources on the thought of the Renaissance delivered at Oberlin College in 1954), one of his strongest affirmations of the rhetorical nature of humanism, “humanism must be understood as a characteristic phase of what may be called the rhetorical tradition in Western culture,”⁴⁷ is coupled with several references to the ideological dimension of the humanist movement. Humanism concerned itself with “the revival of... ancient learning”; it encompassed “classical sources, quotations, and ideas”; the humanists “were able to add genuine wisdom to their eloquence”; their revived interest in such historians as Livy and Polybius “affected the political thought of Machiavelli.”⁴⁸ Humanism, he elaborates in “Humanist Learning in the Italian Renaissance” (1960),⁴⁹ represented “a new and very important phase in the transmission, study, and interpretation of the heritage of classical antiquity.”⁵⁰ This transmission involved philological matters to be sure, but it also included subjects with an ideological intent: “they [the humanists] investigated ancient history and mythology, ancient customs and institutions. And in their effort to take into

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 103. For a fuller account of the content and cultural implications of this study by Kristeller, see below on pp. 219–20.

⁴⁷ “The Humanist Movement,” in *Renaissance Thought: The Classic, Scholastic, and Humanist Strains*, p. 11.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 19 and 21.

⁴⁹ Like other studies by Kristeller, this piece has gone through various reprints. It was last published in *Renaissance Thought and the Arts: Collected Essays* (Princeton, 1990). Here I cite from the 1990 reprint.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

account all evidence of the study of ancient civilization they paid attention to inscriptions and coins, cameos and statues.”⁵¹ The revived interest in classical history, poetry, mythology, and allegory influenced the form and content of humanistic poetry and it “enriched the subject matter of painting and sculpture for many centuries.”⁵² Indeed, the revival of antiquity brought about by the humanists affected the content of all fields of learning from literature to music, from science to theology, and from jurisprudence to political theory. This being the case, Kristeller’s thesis on Renaissance humanism is not as restrictive as it appears *prima facie*. It does put much emphasis on the philological nature of humanistic culture, but, by the same token, it does not exclude *tout à fait* its ideological dimensions.

It seems that Kristeller’s thesis on the medieval origins of Renaissance humanism, which as generally acknowledged dates back to his first years in the United States,⁵³ was due, at least in part, to the polemic against the Italian Renaissance prevalent in the American academy in the first three decades of the twentieth century. In the introduction to his *Renaissance Thought and Its Sources* (1979), referring to ideas he had entertained in the 1940s, he states:

I was impressed with the work of Haskins and Thorndike and with the activities of the Medieval Academy of America, and the “revolt of the medievalists” against the cult and very concept of the Renaissance prompted me to attempt an interpretation of the Renaissance that would take into account the legitimate objections of the medievalists.⁵⁴

The strong linkage between medieval and humanistic culture he refers to in his piece on humanism and Scholasticism recalls Haskins’ argumentation on the link between the culture of twelfth-century France and that of fifteenth-century Italy.⁵⁵ Kristeller eventually came to acknowledge that Renaissance humanism had classical antecedents as we learn obliquely from his introduction to *Renaissance Thought: the Classic, Scholastic, and Humanistic Strains* (1961). He notes here that he had decided to accompany the republishing

⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 6–7.

⁵² Ibid., pp. 12–13 and 17.

⁵³ See, among others, “Paul Oskar Kristeller and His Contribution to Scholarship,” in *Philosophy and Humanism. Renaissance Essays in Honor of Paul Oskar Kristeller*, ed. Edward P. Mahony (New York, 1976), p. 7 and Monfasani, “Toward the Genesis of the Kristeller Thesis,” pp. 1156–57.

⁵⁴ Paul O. Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought and Its Sources*, ed. Michael Mooney (New York, 1979), p. 3. For “the revolt of the medievalists,” see Ferguson, *The Renaissance in Historical Thought*, pp. 329–85.

⁵⁵ On Haskins, see above, pp. 4–5.

of the four lectures on the classical import of humanistic culture he had delivered at Oberlin College with “Humanism and Scholasticism in the Italian Renaissance,” a study on “the medieval antecedents of Renaissance humanism,” so that the reader would not get the impression that Italian humanism was solely the product of classical studies and ancient sources.⁵⁶ Indeed, Kristeller came to see Renaissance humanism as differing in some significant ways from the Middle Ages. Thus, speaking of the intellectuals of Italian humanism, he notes that, unlike their medieval counterparts, they “did not subordinate the development of classical learning to its amalgamation with religious or theological doctrine.”⁵⁷ Likewise they “did not place much credence in miracles and avoided theological speculations, and they tended to account for historical events on a strictly rational basis.”⁵⁸ An important affirmation of Renaissance humanism’s difference from the Middle Ages is found in “Marsilio Ficino as a Man of Letters and the Glosses Attributed to Him in the Caetani Codex of Dante” (1983). While addressing Ficino’s philosophical orientation, Kristeller observes:

Marsilio Ficino, as a thinker, scholar, and writer, has a very complex physiognomy which is not easily reducible to the classical and literary humanist so often met in the Quattrocento. His mature work is dominated by problems and interests relating to metaphysics, theology, medicine, astrology, and magic that were quite alien to most of the humanists of his time. We have learned that his acquaintance with scholastic philosophy and medicine, which goes back to his youth, constitutes a formative and indispensable element for a proper understanding of his later work.⁵⁹

The implicit assumption here is that on the whole Renaissance humanism differed from the Middle Ages in that, unlike the Middle Ages, it excluded such scholastic topics as metaphysics, theology, and astrology, and made use instead of classical norms and ideas.⁶⁰

In reading Kristeller’s many studies on Renaissance humanism, one realizes that what concerns this illustrious intellectual even more than the nature of humanism itself is the belief on his part that the modern scholars’ view of humanism as a challenge to Scholasticism was reducing the rich and vibrant culture of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Italy to a mere

⁵⁶ Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought: The Classic, Scholastic, and Humanist Strains*, p. viii.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁵⁸ Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought and the Arts*, p. 10.

⁵⁹ Paul O. Kristeller, “Marsilio Ficino as a Man of Letters and the Glosses Attributed to Him in the Caetani Codex of Dante,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 36 (1983), 3.

⁶⁰ For a closer analysis of this statement, see Angelo Mazzocco, “Kristeller and the Vernacular,” in *Kristeller Reconsidered: Essays on His Life and Scholarship*, ed. John Monfasani (New York, 2006), pp. 176–78 and n. 65.

confrontation between these two pivotal cultural movements. The fact is that the Italian culture of this period was considerably more varied and significantly less confrontational than modern scholarship would lead us to believe. Kristeller's assessment of the rapport between humanism and Scholasticism parallels in many ways his evaluation of the relationship between Latin and vernacular in Renaissance Italy. Just as in his analysis of the linguistic state of the fifteenth century he argues that Latin and vernacular had coexisted peacefully throughout the Quattrocento, the Cinquecento, and after, functioning as "alternative modes of literary expression,"⁶¹ so too in his discussion of the cultural orientation of the early-Renaissance, he affirms that humanism and Scholasticism "coexisted and developed all the way through and beyond the Renaissance period as different branches of learning."⁶² And just as his examination of the relationship between Latin and the vernacular prompts him to chide those scholars (the purists of the sixteenth century, the romanticists of the nineteenth century, and their followers in the twentieth century), who, he maintained, had asserted that Latin and vernacular were two contrasting, mutually exclusive, linguistic entities, whose constant struggle through the fifteenth century and part of the sixteenth century had eventually led to the triumph of the latter, so too his consideration of the rapport between humanism and Scholasticism causes him to dispute those contemporary authors (Gentile, Baron, Garin?), who, according to him, had envisioned the sudden emergence of a powerful intellectual movement, humanism, which had first challenged and then superseded Scholasticism.⁶³

The interpretations of Renaissance humanism provided by the scholars included in this volume, like those of their predecessors in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, are varied to the point of being contradictory.⁶⁴ The

⁶¹ Paul O. Kristeller, "The Origin and Development of the Language of Italian Prose," *Renaissance Thought and the Arts*, p. 124.

⁶² Kristeller, "Humanism and Scholasticism in the Italian Renaissance," p. 116.

⁶³ According to Kristeller, both of these assumptions were "disproved by plain facts," (*ibid.*, p. 113), that is to say, they were disproved by the enormous textual and documentary material available in the libraries and archives of Italy and Europe, which had hitherto not been effectively utilized or fully explored. For a fuller account of Kristeller's assessment of the relationship between Latin and vernacular and for an understanding of the correlation between his extensive manuscript research and his treatment of important issues of Renaissance humanism, see Mazzocco, "Kristeller and the Vernacular," pp. 163–81, especially pp. 168–69 and 178–80.

⁶⁴ As noted in the Preface, the articles in this volume originated in panels presented at the RSA Annual Meetings in 2003 and 2004. The authors of the articles in this volume may have attended other authors' oral presentations but have not seen the papers in written form. It is my intention that these articles stand on their own; consequently, I have made no attempt to cross-reference them.

only constant is their frequent reference to the works of Baron, Garin, but especially Kristeller. However, though conceptually different, their essays share some important methodological criteria. Consequently, it has been possible to gather them into three parts. Part One considers Renaissance humanism as a movement: its origin, its association with and evolution in the papal court, and its relationship to the medieval encyclopedic tradition; Part Two addresses some of its principal aspects: its definition vis-à-vis Scholasticism, its religious orientations, its rhetorical form, and its literary expressions; and Part Three treats chronologically three of its major agents: Petrarch, Poliziano, and Marcello Adriani. To be sure, the studies included here do not exhaust the present-day scholars' extensive and multifaceted interpretation of Renaissance humanism. Nevertheless, by virtue of their approaching humanistic culture from different vantage points and by their studying in depth some of its key features, they provide a valuable assessment of the state of contemporary scholarship in the area of Renaissance humanism. They are, therefore, of value to those scholars who wish to explore this pivotal cultural movement.

PART ONE

KRISTELLER'S HUMANISTS AS HEIRS OF THE
MEDIÉVAL *DICTATORES*

Ronald G. Witt

Paul Oscar Kristeller's now classic identification of Renaissance Italian humanists as heirs of the medieval *dictatores* requires little elaboration. His was a salutary effort to counter the earlier tendency to speak of humanism as an intellectual movement detached from the social and political world in which it developed. He did this by defining the humanists according to their professional roles within their society. He argued that humanists usually worked as teachers of rhetoric and grammar or served as notaries and lawyers in princely and communal chanceries.¹ Consequently, humanists played the same role in their society as did the *dictatores* of the Middle Ages in theirs. Primarily concerned as were their predecessors with the art of letter writing and the composition and delivery of speeches, the humanists differed from their medieval counterparts in relying on models drawn from classical texts.

In terms of Kristeller's intellectual biography, his thesis that the humanists were essentially rhetoricians was articulated in response to Richard McKeon's article, "Renaissance and Method in Philosophy," in the third volume of *Studies in the History of Ideas* (1935).² In this article McKeon insisted that throughout the Renaissance a tension existed between humanists who were primarily grammarians and those who were rhetoricians. In a lecture given at Connecticut College in 1944 and subsequently published as "Humanism and Scholasticism in the Italian Renaissance," Kristeller opposed McKeon's insistence on a continuing tension between the two orientations by defining humanists "as professional rhetoricians with a

¹ His original statement of the thesis is found in "Humanism and Scholasticism in the Italian Renaissance," *Byzantion* 17 (1944–45), 346–47. The article was subsequently revised and was most recently published in *Renaissance Thought and Its Sources*, ed. M. Mooney (New York, 1979), pp. 85–105. For the many reprints of this article, see John Monfasani, "Toward the Genesis of the Kristeller Thesis of Renaissance Humanism: Four Bibliographical Notes," *Renaissance Quarterly* 53 (2000), 1157.

² Richard McKeon, "Renaissance and Method in Philosophy," *Studies in the History of Ideas* 3 (1935), 37–114.

new, classicist ideal of culture.”³ Consequently, subsuming grammar under rhetoric, he defined humanists heirs of the medieval *dictatores*.⁴

I have insisted for some time on the validity of a distinction between rhetorical and grammatical humanism and in this I am following not only McKeon but more contemporary scholars such as O.B. Hardison and John O’Malley.⁵ In my last book, *‘In the Footsteps of the Ancients’: The Origins of Humanism from Lovato to Bruni* (2000), following this division between the two disciplines, I went beyond Weiss to assert that humanism remained principally a grammatical movement until the early 1400s.⁶ The first Italian humanist, Lovato dei Lovati (1240–1309), was a grammarian humanist in that he was the first to imitate stylistically, that is classicize, ancient Latin poetry. What survives of his Latin prose is in medieval *ars dictaminis*. Indeed, humanists expressed themselves only in poetry until Mussato (1261–1329) began to classicize prose in his historical writing in 1315. Even then humanists used classicizing style only in their private writings. A humanist like Salutati (1331–1406) might work as a *dictator* using medieval *ars dictaminis* for the genres distinctive of rhetoric, that is, oration and public letters, but he employed classicizing Latin in his private

³ “Humanism and Scholasticism,” p. 356. In the revised essay the statement is found on p. 92. Kristeller refers to the McKeon article, p. 354 n. 22a. The note numbered 22a has the appearance of having been added after the article had already been submitted. John Monfasani, “Toward the Genesis of the Kristeller Thesis,” p. 1163, suggests that McKeon’s article “Rhetoric in the Middle Ages,” *Speculum* 17 (1942), 1–32, was the catalyst for Kristeller’s article. In the revised edition, p. 276 n. 24 continues with an observation that suggests a misinterpretation of McKeon’s position. Apparently understanding McKeon to be presenting northern humanism as grammatical and Italian humanism as rhetorical, Kristeller responded by pointing out that Roberto Weiss had shown pre-Petrarchan Italian humanism to have had a grammatical character. In his revised note Kristeller refers to Roberto Weiss, *The Dawn of Humanism* (London, 1947); idem, “Lineamenti per una storia del primo umanesimo fiorentino,” *Rivista storica italiana* 60 (1948), 349–66; and idem, *Il primo secolo dell’umanesimo* (Rome, 1949).

⁴ In 1944–45, he expresses the connection between the humanists and *dictatores* in this way (pp. 356–57): “Moreover, as chancellors and as teachers, the humanists, far from representing a new class, were the professional heirs and successors of the medieval rhetoricians, the so-called *dictatores* who also made their career exactly in these same two professions.” He revises the statement somewhat in the reorganized version of the essay, “Humanism and Scholasticism,” p. 90: “The humanists were not classical scholars who for personal reason had a craving for eloquence, but, vice versa, they were professional rhetoricians, heirs and successors of the medieval rhetoricians, who developed the belief, then new and modern, that the best way to achieve eloquence was to imitate classical modes....”

⁵ O.B. Hardison, “The Orator and the Poet: The Dilemma of Humanist Literature,” *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 1 (1971), 33–44; John O’Malley, “Grammar and Rhetoric in the *Pietas* of Erasmus,” *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 18 (1988), 81–98; and idem, “Egidio da Viterbo, O.S.A. e il suo tempo,” *Studia augustiniiana historica* 5 (1983), 68–84. O’Malley’s article of 1988 had been prepared years prior to publication.

⁶ My thesis is summarized in my *‘In the Footsteps of the Ancients’: The Origins of Humanism from Lovato to Bruni* (Leiden, 2000), pp. 496–500.

compositions.⁷ Only after 1400 with the introduction of Ciceronianism by Bruni, can we speak of the *dictator* in his professional capacity as a humanist and of a humanist rhetoric in the sense urged by Kristeller.

At the same time Kristeller's idea of defining the humanists by looking at the professional role they played in society is a useful way of explaining, at least in part, the origins of humanism, and I would like to use this approach in the rest of the paper. Elsewhere I have characterized early Italian humanism as a response to an ongoing crisis in communal political and moral life. Especially the medieval constellation of political values centered on personal bonds of command and obedience proved ruinous in an urban setting. Although disruption of urban life could not but affect the local clerical community, laymen were even more directly concerned. At least lay intellectuals took the initiative in seeking to construct a new morality centered on civic responsibility.⁸ It is no coincidence that the early leaders of the humanist movement were actively engaged in communal affairs.

⁷ Kristeller does not seem to have studied Salutati's public letters as chancellor of the Florentine Republic since he believed that "the style of writing used by Salutati is quite different from that of Petrus de Vineis or of Rolandinus Passageri," "Humanism and Scholasticism," p. 93. On the style of Salutati's letters, see my *Coluccio Salutati and His Public Letters* (Geneva, 1976) and Daniela de Rosa, *Coluccio Salutati: Il cancelliere e il pensatore politico* (Florence, 1980).

⁸ In defining as laymen individuals who were married and had families, we must be aware that these attributes could also be shared by clerics in lower orders. My sense, however, is that in the course of the thirteenth century, given the increasing importance of communal government in urban society, clerical status for those not intending to rise in the ecclesiastical hierarchy became in general less attractive because, at least in theory, they were excluded from participating actively in political life.

Although by law in thirteenth-century Bologna clerics were prohibited by the guild's rules from becoming notaries, a few, primarily in the first half of the century, can be identified in the matriculation rolls. Indicative of the small number of married lower clergy is that of the more than 2000 names of men joining the notarial guild of Bologna in the thirteenth century, only one is listed whose father was of the lower clergy: *Liber sive matricula notariorum communis Bononie (1219–1299)*, eds. R. Ferrara and V. Valentini (Rome, 1980), p. 210: *Rolandinus domini Bonaventure clerici de capella Sancti Benedicti (1261)*.

At the same time, six notaries are listed as having priests for fathers:

Albertus presbiteri Iohannis de Arçellata, 1221 (21).

Nascibene presbiteri Gerardi de Fossule, 1221 (28).

Amodeus filius presbiteri Iohannis Sancti Columbani, 1221 (31).

Bonandus presbiteri Iohannis de Crepalcorio, 1228 (52).

Iohannes filius olim Bonandi presbiteri de Crepalcorio, 1250 (124). Bonando apparently became a priest to take over his father's parish.

Guido presbiteri Petri de Carviglano, 1259 (193).

The chronological order of these registrations suggests a declining number of children of priests. At the same time the total number is exceedingly small when compared with the total of notaries registered.

It is difficult to know what to make of the listing *Oddo filius Rubini archiepiscopi, 1223–1224 (36)*. There are three cases in which the word *presbyter* is probably a proper name:

It must be added that the early humanist attempt to capture the moral thought of antiquity in classicizing Latin constituted only one response, an elitist one, to the moral crisis of Italy in the thirteenth century. Already a generation before Lovato, Albertano da Brescia (d. c. 1270), a notary writing in an easily accessible Latin, endeavored to promote civic virtues articulated by ancient Roman writers as an alternative to the destructive values of chivalry.⁹ In Lovato's generation another notary, Brunetto Latini (d. 1294), embarked upon a program of translating ancient Latin works into the vernacular in an effort to establish a set of values suited to the urban, commercial, and political character of the Italian commune.¹⁰ Within a century this program, continued by subsequent generations of translators, resulted in rendering a significant portion of the ancient Latin heritage of moral and historical writings available to the vernacular reading public.

Like both these popularizers of a new morality, Lovato, the founder of Italian humanism, was a layman and a notary dedicated to republican politics.¹¹ We know very little about his actual career but to judge from his writings, he felt deep loyalty to the republican commune of Padua. Like Lovato, Mussato was a notary and also a leader in communal politics, ultimately suffering exile for his defense of Padua's republican liberty. We do not know if Lovato was a professional teacher of grammar, but Mussato earned at least a portion of his livelihood from teaching poetry in the Paduan *Studium*.

Indeed, the typical teacher of grammar in Padua was a layman and also a notary. Professor of grammar and rhetoric, Arsegino seems to have studied at Bologna before 1211 when in his first appearance in a Paduan document he is given the title *magister*.¹² The name of a daughter *domina Bartholomea filia olim magistri Arsegini*, his steady employment as *notarius* while teaching, and his last office in 1233 as *sacri palatii notarius existens in*

Albertus Presbiteri de Montesevero, 1237 (78).

Ugolinus quondam domini Ugolini Presbiteri de cappella Sancti Ambroxii, 1259 (159).
Dominus Anthonius quondam Ugolini Presbiteri capelle Sancte Marie Maioris, 1291 (411).

As a consequence, in the present essay I have assumed that all teachers married and/or having children are lay and that all notaries mentioned are laymen.

⁹ On Albertano's use of ancient literature, see my 'In the Footsteps of the Ancients,' pp. 58–62.

¹⁰ I contrast these two ways of appropriating the ancient heritage, *ibid.*, pp. 206–07.

¹¹ The biographies of Lovato and Mussato are discussed, *ibid.*, pp. 95–112 and 118–20. For Mussato's teaching in the *Studium*, see *ibid.*, p. 119 n. 9.

¹² Paolo Marangon, "La *Quadriga* e i proverbi di Arsegino," in *idem, Ad cognitionem scientiae festinare. Gli studi nell'Università e nei conventi di Padova nei secoli xiii e xiv*, ed. T. Pesenti (Trieste, 1997), 33.

officio sigilli comunis Padue testify to his lay status.¹³ Similarly his younger contemporary *magister Johannes de Coreda* (d. 1257/58) was a teacher of grammar and a notary.¹⁴ Despite his apparent Cremonese origin, he was a member of the Consiglio dei Quattrocento in 1252. Although it is only recorded that they “taught school,” two other Paduan notaries were in all probability teaching grammar in these same years.¹⁵

Of the six *magistri* of rhetoric and grammar cited by Rolandino as present along with other professors of the Paduan *Studium* at the reading of his *Cronaca* in 1262, Rolandino himself, Morando, Zunta, Domenico, Paduano, and Luchiesio, the status of only three is known.¹⁶ Rolandino (c. 1200–76), who appears as a professor in the *Studium* for the first time in 1229, was active throughout his life as a notary and communal official.¹⁷ Likewise, though having a less glorious career, *magister* Domenico worked as a notary and communal official.¹⁸ *Magister* Paduano's lay status is proven by the fact that he had a son, *Principus notarius q. magistri Paduani doctoris gramatice*.¹⁹

My argument here is that in thirteenth-century Padua an intimate connection existed between lay teachers of grammar, the notariate, and participation

¹³ Antonio Rigon, “Su Simone vicentino *iuris civilis professor* e sui *magistri* Arsegino e Giovanni de Coreda cremonese (sec. XIII),” *Quaderni per la storia dell'Università di Padova* 11 (1978), 124.

¹⁴ In his case we have the name of a son: “Niger olim *magistri* Iohannis artis gramatice professoris,” Marangon, “La Quadriga,” p. 16 n. 74. His listing as a member of the Council is given by Marangon, “Scuole e università a Padova dal 1221 al 1256,” *Ad cognitionem scientiae festinare*, p. 52. Both Andrea Gloria, *Monumenti dell'Università di Padova 1222–1318* (Venice, 1884), pp. 372–73, and Marangon, “La Quadriga,” p. 18, maintain that a *magister* Leonardus, who had a school in 1229, was a teacher of grammar, but there is no strong proof for their assertion.

¹⁵ Marangon, “Scuole e università a Padova dal 1221 al 1256,” pp. 52–53, identifies two notaries, *magister* Traversino and *magister* Ugo, each of whom “*docet scolares*” in 1254. *Magister* Luchiesio olim *Iohannis Caurete* (1254), identified by Rolandino eight years later as “*professor*” in “*grammatica et rhetorica*,” is also recorded here, but again without any indication of whether he was a layman or a cleric.

¹⁶ Rolandinus, *Cronica in factis et circa facta Marchie Trivixane*, ed. A. Bonardi (Città di Castello, 1905–08), RSI, bk. 12.19: 173–74, lists “*magister* Rolandinus, *magister* Morandus, *magister* Zunta, *magister* Dominicus, *magister* Paduanus, *magister* Luchiesius, in *grammatica et rethorica vigiles et utiles professores*.”

¹⁷ Gloria, *Monumenti dell'Università di Padova*, pp. 371–72; and Girolamo Arnaldi, *Studi sui cronisti della Marca trevigiana nell'età di Ezzelino da Romano* (Rome, 1963), pp. 120–27. F. Polizzi, “Rolandinus Paduanus professor gramatice facultatis,” *Quaderni per la storia dell'Università di Padova* 17 (1984), 231–32, adds details on his notarial career.

¹⁸ A Paduan document of 1260 gives his signature as *Ego Dominicus professor artis gramatice et sacri palatii notarius existens in officii sigilli Comunis Padue*. Gloria, *Monumenti dell'Università di Padova*, p. 373.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 374. From a signature in a notarial document by his grandson we know that the family name of *magister* Paduano was Piombioli: *Tadeus dictus Principus de Plumbiolis q. magistri Paduani doctoris gramatice*.

in communal government, whether in a political or administrative office.²⁰ This connection in turn served to foster the development of humanism because: (1) notaries were as a group the most active participants in thirteenth-century communal service in Padua and accordingly the most sensitive to the social and political needs of their society and to the dangers threatening its stability; and (2) as grammarians, these political leaders and public officials had access to knowledge of ancient Rome and the opportunity to turn to Rome as a model of urban life and political stability. Consequently, I conclude that the educational and political situation of Padua contributed to the precocious appearance of humanism in that city.

Admittedly the close connection between the notariate, politics, and teaching grammar was probably not uncommon in other communes of northern and central Italy in the thirteenth century. As far as can be judged from the fragmentary evidence, however, no other city except Bologna offered the concentration of grammatical studies available in Padua. The renown of Bologna as the educational center of Italy attracted not only students from all over Italy and from abroad but also teachers. As in Padua, the educational establishment, with the exception of teachers of canon law, was controlled by laymen, but unlike Padua, because a multitude of private schools of grammar and rhetoric flourished in the city, the commune had no need to support six professors of rhetoric and grammar in the *Studium* concurrently. My analysis, however, will show that the intimate tie between grammarian, notarial activity, and communal government, vital to the development of humanism in Padua, did not exist in Bologna.

Otherwise one might wonder why the new intellectual, literary movement did not begin in Bologna, the site of Italy's greatest university and the cultural dynamo of Italy in the century between 1150 and 1250. Unlike a number of other Italian cities, Bologna had not had an important cathedral school in the tenth and eleventh centuries. The schools of Roman law that began to flourish in the city after 1100 were apparently all private schools and most teaching of canon law was also done in the same way.²¹ As for grammar, the first teacher identified as a professional grammarian in Bologna, *magister Albertus, grammaticus de Sancto Marino*, a layman,

²⁰ Most of these men also probably taught rhetoric, but because early humanism was grammatical in character, rhetoric still being committed to *ars dictaminis*, the unclassical genre of prose dictating the rules for public eloquence, I am concerned with the grammatical side of their teaching.

²¹ See the discussion in my forthcoming *The Italian Difference. The Two Latin Cultures of Medieval Italy, 800-1250*.

was presumably also teaching in a private school.²² One of the principal purposes of these schools was to provide the training in Latin necessary to enter the law schools, where students were taught logic and legal Latin.²³

The competitive character of the Bolognese academic community and the unusual extent of cultural exchange with other parts of Europe, especially France, helps explain the peculiar relationship between grammar and rhetoric there. Grammar was dignified by a chair or chairs in the Bolognese *Studium* at least as early as 1218, and probably several decades earlier.²⁴ Until 1291, however, no chair in the *Studium* existed for rhetoric.²⁵ Given the publications of at least two holders of chairs of grammar, Bene da Firenze and Bono da Lucca, rhetoric may well have enjoyed a place in their university teaching, but it is possible that their rhetorical manuals were composed when they were private teachers. The elevation of grammar to a university subject along with Roman and canon law was largely due to the introduction of French grammatical theories in Bologna in the last decades of the twelfth century, which enhanced the academic status of grammar by making it a theoretical discipline.²⁶

Grammar teachers at the secondary level in Bolognese schools, moreover, probably seasoned the teaching of grammar with the study of *ars dictaminis*, which in this century was equivalent to rhetoric. But the intensely competitive market for education increasingly favored specialization so that whereas throughout the thirteenth century in smaller educational markets like Padua grammar and rhetoric continued to be taught interchangeably,

²² On Alberto, see Giovanni Santini, *L'università e società nel XII secolo: Pillio da Medicina e lo Studio di Modena. Tradizione e innovazione nella scuola dei Glossatori* (Modena, 1979), pp. 138–39, 294 (1113 n. 16), 297 (1160 n. 30), and 300 (1168 n. 40). Against Santini's claim that Albertus de S. Marino formed part of the cathedral chapter of Modena, see Corrado Ricci, *I primordi dello studio bolognese. Nota storica* (Bologna, 1887), p. 71, doc. 18 and p. 95, doc. 36, who finds Alberto's name in 1113 and 1130 numbered among Bolognese laymen swearing an oath. His son is also listed with him in 1130. Cf. Giorgio Cencetti, "Studium fuit Bolognae," *Studi medievali*, 3rd ser. 7 (1966), 795–96.

²³ Significantly, the third member of the trivium, logic or dialectic, did not emerge as a discipline independent of law schools until after 1250. I discuss the stunted growth of logic in Italy in the twelfth century in my *'In the Footsteps of the Ancients,'* p. 353, and in my forthcoming *The Italian Difference*.

²⁴ See n. 28, below.

²⁵ James Banker, "The *Ars dictaminis* and Rhetorical Textbooks at the Bolognese University in the Fourteenth Century," *Medievalia et Humanistica*, n.s. 5 (1974), 154–55, notes that Jacopo of Liège was appointed to a professorship in rhetoric in that year and Giovanni di Bonandrea in the year following.

²⁶ My "The French Cultural Invasion, 1180–1230," *Papers on Rhetoric. Atti del Convegno Internazionale "Dictamen, Poetria and Cicero: Coherence and Diversification,"* ed. Lucia Calboli Montefusco, 5 (Rome, 2003), pp. 232–34 and 237–43.

in Bologna, as the century progressed, the tendency was for teachers to specialize in one subject or the other.

Because their courses taught basic skills of communication needed by the broad range of semi-Latin-literate, rhetoricians in Bologna had no need of a place in the *Studium* to attract students. Knowledge of *dictamen* was easily in reach of those having only minimal training in grammar. Perfection of one's technique, of course, required much experience. *Ars dictaminis* in its business-like *stilus humilis* form had begun at Bologna in the first decade of the twelfth century and all Europe was in Bologna's debt for its instruction. The creation of the first chair in rhetoric in the *Studium* in 1291, consequently, was a tardy recognition of the academic value of a field in which Bologna had for two centuries excelled all other cities of Western Europe.

After Alberto da San Marino, no other teachers of grammar have been identified until the last quarter of the century when there are three: two clerics, Uguccone and Oddone, and a layman, Bene da Firenze. Uguccone probably ceased teaching grammar in the 1180s when he turned to teaching canon law full time.²⁷ Oddone made a similar change in 1194.²⁸ The

²⁷ A certain "Ogucchio" was the author of a *Summa artis grammaticae*, which exists in one early thirteenth-century manuscript, MS Munich, Staatsbibl. Lat. 18908. A brief summary of its contents is found in C.H. Kneepens, *Het Iudicium constructionis: Het leerstuk van de constructio in de 2de helft van de 12de eeuw*, 4 vols. (Nijmegen, 1987), 1:139–43. A work reflecting mid-twelfth century French interests in speculative grammar, the *Summa* depended on the treatise *Breve sit* of the Parisian master Robert, whom the author identified as his master. Given the rarity of the name and the existence of a contemporary grammarian Huguccio at Bologna, it is almost certain that Ogucchio is the same person.

Wolfgang Müller, *Huguccio: The Life, Works, and Thought of a Twelfth-Century Jurist* (Washington, D.C., 1994), pp. 44–45, raises the possibility that the grammarian and the canonist were two different men. He tends to see the second as the later bishop of Ferrara (d. 1210) and the first as identical with the student of the French grammarian Robert. For Robert's book, see Kneepkens, *Het Iudicium constructionis*, 2:1–326. Against Müller's position is the fact that the author of *Summa decretorum* refers to himself as the author of the *Agiographia* while the author of that work claims authorship of the *Magnae derivationes: De dubio accentu. Agiographia. Expositio de symbolo apostolorum*, ed. Giuseppe Cremascoli (Spoleto, 1978), pp. 94–97.

²⁸ For Oddone, see Bene Florentini, *Candelabrum*, ed. Gian Carlo Alessio, 2 (Padua, 1983), p. xxviii. Robert Black, *Humanism and Education in Medieval and Renaissance Italy. Tradition and Innovation in Latin Schools from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 86 n. 142, maintains that Oddone (Black writes Hugo), the grammarian and later Oddone, the canon lawyer are not one and the same on the grounds that it was unlikely that the same man would specialize in such two different professions. Ugucchio, however, did the same thing.

Bene had a son who is mentioned in Bene Florentini, *Candelabrum*, p. xxvii: "Matteus filius magistri Bene." In 1218 Bene's oath to teach no where but Bologna contained a

youngest of the three, Bene, author of a *Summa grammaticae*, started teaching in the 1190s and appears to have taught until near his death about 1240. He must have given instruction in rhetoric as well as grammar because he authored at least two manuals of *dictamen*, *Summa dictaminis* and his monumental *Candelabrum*, but one sees in these works a grammarian who turned his hand to rhetoric. Boncompagno da Signa (d. c. 1240), his professional enemy, had no doubt that, while he himself was an *orator*, Bene was a grammarian or to use Boncompagno's expression, one of the *garamantes*.²⁹

For later grammarians teaching in Bologna, we must wait until the last third of the century when the Bolognese *Memoriali* with their abundant documentation begin to identify members of this group of teachers.³⁰ In

proviso that in case he were to receive a clerical office in Florence, he would be released from his contract to the *Studium* to return to Florence to teach clerics there. A. Gaudenzi, "Sulla cronologia delle opere dei dettatori bolognesi da Buoncompagno a Bene di Lucca," *Bollettino dell'Istituto storico italiano* 14 (1895), 110. The oath is found in *Chartularium Studii bononiensis. Documenti per la storia dell'Università di Bologna dalle origini fino al secolo XV*, 1 (Bologna, 1909), pp. 23–24: "...juro ego magister Bene non dare operam ullo modo quod Studium civitatis Bononie aliquo tempore alibi transferatur...et alibi ullo tempore in gramatica facultate non regam, nec scholas habebō, salvo tamen quod si promotus essem ad officium clericale in civitate Florentie, ut liceat mihi legere clericis illius ecclesie tamen in qua essem ad ordinem clericalem promotus." He never seems to have received the office, because he remained in Bologna: [author unnamed], "Bene da Firenze," *DBI* 8 (Rome, 1966), pp. 239–40. Very possibly his wife had died by 1218 and he was seeking to return home to teach in the cathedral with a lucrative benefice.

For a general discussion of Bene's life and works see "Bene da Firenze," pp. 239–240. Although it cannot be proven that he held a professorship in the *Studium* until 1218, on the basis of his grammar and an earlier *Summa dictaminis* (1199–1216) he was doubtless teaching there earlier. Also see Gian Carlo Alessio's introduction to Bene Florentini, *Candelabrum*, pp. xxvii–xxxi. For the dates of both the grammar and the dictaminal works, see pp. xxviii–xxix. The only study of Bene's *Summa grammaticae* known to me is that of C. Marchesi, "Due grammatici del medio evo," *Bollettino della Società Filologica Romana* 12 (1910), 24–37, who summarizes the treatise. Black's objection to Alessio's position that Bene's teaching goes back to the early 1190s (*Humanism and Education*, p. 86 n. 142) is based on his belief that French influence on grammar appeared only after 1200. He does not take account of Huguccio's grammar cited above, n. 24. Gian Carlo Alessio, "L'allegoria nei trattati di grammatica e di retorica," *Dante e le forme dell'allegoresi*, ed. M. Picone (Ravenna, 1987), p. 27, has identified as well an anonymous late twelfth-century grammar found in *Bibl. Feliniana*, Lucca, 614, which represents a compilation of recent French grammatical material and, consequently, is contemporary with Bene's *Summa grammaticae*.

²⁹ Boncompagno, who unambiguously considered himself an *orator*, was highly critical of grammarians, especially Huguccio and Bene, whom he accused of attempting to annex rhetoric to their discipline: my "Boncompagno and the Defense of Rhetoric," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 16 (1986), 1–31, especially 10–13; "The French Cultural Invasion," p. 244; and my forthcoming *The Italian Difference*.

³⁰ My analysis of grammarians in Bologna is largely dependent on Guido Zaccagnini, "L'insegnamento privato a Bologna e altrove nei secc. XIII e XIV," *Atti e memorie della r. deputazione di storia patria per le provincie di Romagna*, 4th ser., 13 (1923), 254–301, who

the case of the *Studium*, only four professors of grammar are known as teaching in the last third of the century. The status of the earliest, Gerardo da Cremona (1265–74) is not known, but Bonaccio d’Osio da Bergamo (1273–91) was a cleric while Bono da Lucca (1268–79) and Rainieri del maestro Gerardo Albriconi da Reggio (1288–1327) were laymen.³¹ Nothing remains of the writings of three of these professors, but Bono’s manual of *ars dictaminis*, *Cedrus Libani*, a work borrowing generously from the *Candelabrum* of Bene, survives.

As for grammarians teaching at the intermediate and primary levels, fifty-three teachers of grammar in the first group and seventeen in the second have been identified.³² Of the secondary teachers the civil status of nine teachers can be documented and they all appear to be laymen:

- (1) Giovanni del fu Jacobino da Vicenza, 1267–1314.³³
- (2) Ruggero di Marino da Firenze, 1268–92.³⁴

lists the *doctores puerorum* on pp. 269–70, grammarians teaching privately, pp. 272–78, and teachers of the *Studium*, pp. 278–79. Zaccagnini, “Per la storia letteraria del Duecento. Notizie biografiche ed appunti degli archivi bolognesi,” *Il libro e la stampa* 6 (1912–13), 113–60, oddly provides another but shorter list of grammar teachers that adds names but leaves out many on the earlier list. Zaccagnini’s summary of teachers is a reworking and amplification of Giovanni Livi’s list in *Dante e Bologna* (Bologna, 1921), pp. 108–12. Zaccagnini lists Giovanni di Bonandrea as teaching in the *Studium* as a grammarian, p. 279. Zaccagnini, “Giovanni di Bonandrea dettatore e rimatore e altri grammatici e dottori in arti dello studio bolognese,” *Studi e memorie per la storia dell’Università di Bologna* 5 (1920), 188–89, publishes Bonandrea’s election as professor of rhetoric in the *Studium* in 1292. See, as well, Banker, “The *Ars dictaminis* and Rhetorical Textbook,” pp. 155–56.

³¹ Zaccagnini, “L’insegnamento privato,” p. 279. Bonaccio da Osio da Bergamo, a cleric, is listed as teaching 1273–91. Referring to his own education years earlier in Bologna, Giovanni d’Andrea writes: “Postea sub viro multae reverentiae magistro Bonifatio de Pergamo [Bonaccio] qui etiam postea fuit sacerdos et canonicus pergamensis...” *Ibid.*, p. 272.

³² In counting grammar teachers and elementary teachers I have added the following to Zaccagnini’s list of 48 grammar teachers in “Insegnamento privato a Bologna,” pp. 273–76: Gentile da Cingoli (see below, n. 40); Bonaço, *doctor grammaticae*, who taught at least between 1273 until his death in 1278–79; his son, who was teaching grammar in 1279; and *magister Bonatius de Bergamo doctor artis grammatice*, who is recorded as teaching in 1281–1286. Zaccagnini, “Per la storia letteraria,” p. 115. To the fourteen names of elementary teachers I have added three: fra Giovanni di Miglio degli Spigliati da Figline, Stefano del fu Pietro, and a Spaniard recorded as *dominus Gonsalvus Goniççii magister scholarum*. For fra Giovanni and Stefano, see below, n. 44; for Gonsalvo, see “Per la storia letteraria,” p. 118.

³³ Listed by Zaccagnini, “Insegnamento privato,” p. 273. A document (*ibid.*, p. 297 [xv]) shows his having three sons.

³⁴ Zaccagnini in “Insegnamento privato” (p. 273) does not list Ruggero, but instead a “Rogerio.” Nevertheless, he grants (p. 273 n. 4) that he could be identical with Ruggero di Marino da Firenze whom Livi, *Dante e Bologna*, p. 108, lists as teaching from 1271–1292, but with no document to support the entry. In 1292, Benvenuta del fu Maserino, “moglie del magistro Ruggero grammatico,” writes her testament. Zaccagnini, “Insegnamento privato,” p. 273 n. 4.

- (3) Tebaldo di Bonaventura d'Amendola, 1279–1290.³⁵
- (4) Consiglio del fu Giovanni di Simeone da Matelica, 1268–1313.³⁶
- (5) Gerardino del fu Enrico da Reggio, 1292–1304.³⁷
- (6) Mino da Colle, 1267.³⁸
- (7) Bencivenni da Gagliana in Val di Lamone, 1273.³⁹
- (8) Gentile da Cingoli.⁴⁰
- (9) Bonazo, 1273–78.⁴¹

Of the seventeen *doctores puerorum* and *repetitores* the civil status of only three can be defined.

- (1) Bongino o Nongino o Longino d'Azzo bresciano, 1268–93.⁴²
- (2) Bondi, 1295.⁴³
- (3) fra Giovanni di Migliore degli Spigliati da Figline, 1292.⁴⁴

³⁵ Ibid., p. 273, for dates of teaching. He had three sons who taught in Bologna: Bonazunta del fu Tebaldo (1301); Bonventura o Tura del fu maestro Tebaldo (1303); and Giovanni del fu Tebaldo (1301–12). Ibid., p. 276. Zaccagnini's "Giovanni di Bonandrea," p. 174 n. 7, has Giovanni teaching since 1296.

³⁶ Zaccagnini, "Insegnamento privato," p. 274, for chronology. He is included in the *estimo* of 1305 with his wife *Adelasia quondam Gualterii de Castro Britonum*. Idem, "Giovanni da Bonandrea," p. 175. His son Giovanni di Consilio da Matelica was also a teacher (1310–1315). "Insegnamento privato," p. 277.

³⁷ Listed *ibid.*, p. 276. He was the father of Rainerio di Geraldo Albriconi; see above n. 31.

³⁸ Ibid. p. 275, for listing. His testament is published by Zaccagnini in "Mino da Colle grammatico e rimatore del sec. xiii," *Miscellanea storica della Valdelsa* 39 (1931), 10. Because all witnesses to the testament are laymen it is almost certain that he was a layman.

³⁹ "Insegnamento privato," p. 273. He is the father of Rainerio di Bencivenni, who taught in Bologna between 1268 and 1279. Ibid., p. 273, and Zaccagnini, "Per la storia letteraria," p. 115.

⁴⁰ Sinibaldo di Gentile da Cingoli (*repetitor et maestro*) is listed by Zaccagnini, "Insegnamento privato," p. 273, as teaching between 1266 and 1289. Although Gentile was known later as a professor of natural sciences in Bologna, extant is a *flores gramatice*, suggesting that at some time in his career Gentile taught grammar in the Bolognese schools. S. Gentile, "Gentile da Cingoli," *DBI* 53 (Rome, 1999), p. 156. Also, given the tendency of sons to follow their fathers in teaching, as shown by instances cited above, it is very likely that Gentile himself had taught grammar. The fact that he had a son working as a *repetitor* as early as 1266, probably in his middle teens at the earliest, suggests that the current birth-date for Gentile "intorno alla seconda metà del XIII secolo" (*ibid.*, p. 156) is incorrect and should be antedated at least to the 1240s. This would mean that the chronology of his training in Paris and his introduction to the Aristotelian texts there should be revised accordingly.

⁴¹ See above, n. 32 for him and his son.

⁴² Zaccagnini, "Insegnamento privato," p. 270. He had a son *Dominus Azolinus, filius magistri Longini quondam Azi qui fuit de Nogi comitatus Brixie*... Ibid., p. 270 n. 6.

⁴³ He is listed in *ibid.*, p. 270. He was the father of two well-known grammarians, Bertoluccio and Guizzardo. Ibid., p. 270 n. 2. Zaccagnini lists Bertolucci del fu Bondi as teaching in the *Studium* in 1312–1333; and his brother Guicciardo di Bondi del Frignano in

Thus, of the seventy names of grammarians known to be working in elementary and intermediate grammar schools in the period 1265–1300, the clerical or lay status of twelve is determinable. Of this number only the friar Giovanni di Migliore, was definitely a cleric. If the teachers whose status we know are considered representative of the whole body of teachers in these fields in Bologna, throughout the thirteenth century, beginning with Bene and Boncompagno, laymen played a dominant role in teaching grammar and rhetoric. While in this regard the civil status of teachers in Bologna was not much different from that in Padua, a major difference between the lay grammar teachers in the two cities was that probably none of those in Bolognese were practicing notaries.⁴⁵

As previously mentioned, although teaching grammar in the *Studium*, Bene and Bono authored manuals of *ars dictaminis*. In contrast, at least beginning with Boncompagno da Signa, professional rhetoricians, teaching privately, do not appear to have taught grammar. We cannot be sure of the civil status of Boncompagno, the earliest Bolognese rhetorician in the thirteenth century. Despite all his abundant surviving writings, however, there is no evidence indicating any ecclesiastical ties and in all probability he was a layman. Guido Faba (c. 1190–1245), already a *magister* in 1210, most likely teaching rhetoric, became a notary in 1216 and between 1221–22 served as the bishop of Bologna's scribe. He subsequently worked for a short time at the papal curia. At some point in the 1220s he may have become a cleric, although from 1223 to the end of his life he taught rhetoric in the city.⁴⁶ Faba's clerical status, however, would have been exceptional when

1289–1320. Ibid., pp. 275 and 279. Bertoluccio, author of *Flores gramatici* left a son, *magister Thomaxius quondam magistri Bartolutii, doctor in gramatica*. Zaccagnini, "Le epistole in latino e in volgare di Pietro de' Boattieri," *Studi e memorie per la storia dell'Università di Bologna* 8 (1924), p. 242. In this article Zaccagnini dates Bertuccio's teaching as beginning in 1310, p. 241.

⁴⁴ Zaccagnini, "Giovanni di Bonandrea," p. 173, cites a contract of 1292 between fra Giovanni and Stefano del fu Pietro, at the time a student (*scolaris Bononie in grammatica*), to create a grammar school together.

⁴⁵ Of all the grammar teachers teaching at all levels in Bologna in the thirteenth century, only one, Gerardo da Cremona, about whom nothing else is known, might have belonged to the Bolognese notarial guild. A *Gerrardinus Cremonensis* is listed as *notarius* in 1219 in the *Liber sive matricula notariorum communis Bononie (1219–1299)*, eds. R. Ferrara and V. Valentini (Rome, 1980), p. 5. Young men entering the guild were usually in their late teens or early twenties, so it is not impossible that Gerardo could have been teaching in the *Studium* as late as 1274.

⁴⁶ On Guido Faba, see Guido F. Bausi, "Fava (Faba), Guido (Guido bononiensis)," *DBI* 45 (Rome, 1995), pp. 413–19. Bausi notes that Faba calls himself at times *cappellanus*, *canonicus*, *sacerdos* and *presbyter*, and *ecclesie sancti Michaelis fori medii cappellanus* (p. 414) and he concludes that it is "molto probabile" that he became a cleric at some point in his life. However, as Bausi goes on to say "... non è da escludere, però, che nel prologo alla *Rota*

compared with that of the remaining rhetoricians identified as working in the city in the thirteenth-century. Matteo de' Libri (d. c. 1275), Tommasino di Armannino (d. c. 1287), and Pietro Boattieri (c. 1260–c. 1319) were married men and, while we have no indication that Giovanni di Bonandrea, who taught from 1292–1321, had a wife, the fact that he was for many years Chancellor of the Commune of Bologna makes clerical status highly unlikely.⁴⁷ While Boncompagno was a foreigner, the other five were native Bolognese and notaries.

Rather than with grammar, rhetoricians combined teaching rhetoric with instruction in composing legal documents. Bologna in the thirteenth century was without question the center of training for the *ars notarie* in western Europe and at mid-century there were two preeminent masters of the *ars notarie*, Salatielle and Rolandino Passaggeri.⁴⁸ Passaggeri's interest in *ars notarie* is reflected in the extensive section devoted to sample letters in his master work *Summa totius notarie*, while rhetoricians proper wrote manuals of *ars notarie* and at least one offered an introductory course in Roman law in his school.⁴⁹ Paduan rhetoricians may have had apprentice

nova questa carica (chierico o cappellano della chiesa di S. Michele di Mercato di Mezzo a Bologna) non sia da intendere come una autentica carica ecclesiastica." Bausi dates the *Rota nova* as 1225–26, p. 414. He became a notary in 1210, p. 413.

⁴⁷ Matteo's wife was called Bibilla (*Bibilla, uxor quondam domini Mattei quondam Alberti de' Libris de capella sancti Iohannis in monte*). Zaccagnini, "Per la storia letteria," p. 125. He became a notary in 1232. *Ibid.*, p. 123. In 1272, Tommasino di Armannino married a certain Maria. *Ibid.*, p. 127. His notarial acts appear after 1280 "con una straordinaria frequenza ed in gran numero." *Ibid.*, p. 126. On the work of the latter, see Francesco Novati, "Di un' *Ars punctandi* erroneamente attribuita a Francesco Petrarca," *Rendiconti del R. Istituto lombardo di scienze e lettere*, 2nd ser., 42 (1907), 83–118. On his son, Armannino di Tommasino, see G. Ghinassi, "Armannino da Bologna," *DBI* 4 (Rome, 1962), pp. 224–25. On Boattieri, see G. Orlandelli, "Boattieri, Pietro," *DBI* 10 (Rome, 1968), 803–05. He married in 1290. *Ibid.*, p. 804. For Giovanni di Bonandrea, see F.L. Schiavetto, "Giovanni di Bonandrea," *DBI* 55 (Rome, 55), 726–29. He became a notary in 1266. *Ibid.*, p. 727.

⁴⁸ Salatielle's *Ars notarie* (1242–1254) is edited. *Ars notariae*, ed. G. Orlandelli, *Vol. I, I frammenti della prima stesura dal codice bolognese dell'Archigimnasio B 1484* and *Vol. 2, La seconda stesura dai codici della Biblioteca nazionale di Parigi lat. 4593 e lat. 14622* (Milan, 1961). The work was initiated in 1237 and finished in its first form in 1242; it was subsequently taken out of circulation and then between 1242 and 1254 reworked. *Ibid.*, p. ix. The treatise is briefly described by Orlandelli, "Appunti sulla scuola bolognese di notariato nel secolo XIII per una edizione della *Ars notarie* di Salatielle," *Studi e memorie per la storia dell'Università di Bologna*, n.s. 2 (Bologna, 1961), 29–37. For a brief discussion with bibliography of Rolandino's work, see G. Orlandelli, "La scuola di notariato," in *Le sedi della cultura nell'Emilia Romagna. L'età comunale*, ed. G. Arnaldi (Milan, 1984), pp. 146–47. For the date of the work and its chronological relationship to Rolandino's other writings see "Appunti," p. 8.

⁴⁹ *Summa totius artis notariae Rolandini Rodulphini bononiensis*... (Venice, 1546; anastatic repr., Bologna, 1977). Boncompagno's three notarial tracts are discussed by Carl Sutter, *Aus Leben und Schriften des Magisters Boncompagno* (Freiburg and Leipzig, 1894), pp. 66–74. He publishes the prefaces to two of them in these pages. Boattieri wrote at least three notarial

notaries working with them but there is no indication that schools devoted to *ars notarie* existed in the city. Indeed, Padua generally seems to have lacked the legal culture that so predominated in Bologna.

As notaries, rhetoricians formed part of the second-tier of Bologna's legal community beneath that of the Roman lawyers and they enjoyed a near monopoly over positions in the communal bureaucracy. The typical notary depended on the hundreds of short-term appointments available in government offices to supplement his income from private practice. Many were also active in other lines of work.⁵⁰ Beginning in the mid-part of the thirteenth century, moreover, as the control of the merchants and bankers over communal politics lessened, the notaries led by Passaggeri increasingly came to the fore in communal politics. Their guild became so dominant that the government ruling Bologna after 1280 has been termed "la repubblica di notai."⁵¹

Entrusted as they were with transforming the decisions of the commune and other official bodies into official statements of policy, Bolognese notaries were also the architects of the political theology framing the most important public documents. Drawing on all the stylistic resources of *ars dictaminis*, they utilized prefaces to frame legislative acts so as to reconcile the original equality of mankind established by God with a hierarchical structure of command and obedience. They did this in part by paralleling human government with the angelic hierarchy where orders of angels related to one another in the same way.⁵²

manuals (Orlandelli, "Boattieri, Pietro," p. 804) and his school in Bologna offered classes in *ars dictaminis*, *ars notarie*, and provided an introduction to the study of Roman law. *Ibid.*, p. 805

⁵⁰ Brian R. Carniello, "The Notaries of Bologna: Family, Profession and Popular Politics in a Medieval Italian City-State," PhD diss., UCLA, 2005.

⁵¹ The phrase is that of G. Orlandelli, "Premessa," *Liber sive matricula notariorum*, p. viii. Alfred Hessel, *Geschichte der Stadt Bologna von 1116–1280* (Berlin, 1910), pp. 342–43, deals with the ascent of the notarial guild to political power. He regards the constitutional reforms of 1255–1256 as marking the beginning of the political ascendancy attained by the notaries in 1280. *Ibid.*, pp. 518–19. On the role of the notaries in Bolognese society and politics in the first half of the thirteenth century, see Giorgio Tamba, "Il notariato a Bologna nell'età di Federico II," *Federico II e Bologna* (Bologna, 1996), pp. 83–105. For the second half of the century, see his *Una corporazione per il potere. Il notariato a Bologna in età comunale* (Bologna, 1998), pp. 299–324. On the notarial guild's rise to political pre-eminence, see as well Antonio I. Pini, "Bologna nel suo secolo d'oro: da 'comune aristocratico' a 'repubblica di notai,'" *Rolandino e l'ars notaria da Bologna all'Europa. Atti del convegno internazionale di studi storici sulla figura e l'opera di Rolandino*, ed. Giorgio Tamba (Milan, 2002), pp. 1–20.

⁵² Massimo Giansante, *Retorica e politica nel Duecento. I notai bolognesi e l'ideologia comunale* (Rome, 1999), analyzes the rhetoric of a series of Bolognese documents either written by Rolandino Passaggeri or influenced by him. For these themes, see especially pp. 110–11 and 117–41.

In contrast to the rhetoricians, many of the teachers of grammar in Bologna were foreigners and had no relationship to the political life of the city. All five of the teachers identified as teaching grammar in the *Studium* from Bene da Firenze to Rainieri da Reggio, for example, were in this category. The names of many of those teaching at the primary and secondary levels suggest as well an origin beyond the city walls. For this reason, the community of grammarians, in contrast to that of the rhetoricians, appears to have been politically marginalized.

Consequently, whereas in Padua the study and teaching of grammar and participation in government were frequently continuous, in Bologna no such connection existed. For Bolognese teachers of grammar, politics lacked the immediacy it held for their counterparts in Padua and, as a result, grammatical learning remained more academic. As I have suggested, it was the Paduan grammarians' sense of urgency, of moral and political crisis, born of their practical political experience, which sent them to the ancient writers in search of models according to which they could reform their own age.

In Padua as in Bologna public rhetoric remained based on *ars dictaminis* down into the fifteenth century. Kristeller is right in affirming that the humanists as public officials and orators were heirs of the medieval *dictatores*. As rhetoricians, the earliest Paduan humanists remained prisoners of an international form of communication so finely tuned to the demands of politics that it could not be abandoned. As grammarians and as private scholars, however, they experimented with a new stylistic form so difficult to master that it could be introduced only gradually, first in poetry and subsequently during the fourteenth century in historical writing, personal letters, treatises, and finally, early in the fifteenth, in oratory. Early Italian humanism would lose some of its distinctively secular orientation in the hands of Petrarch and his immediate followers, but the intimate connection between grammar, the notariate, and politics in the modest university setting of Padua laid the foundation for Petrarch's own project for encoding the moral values of antiquity in classicizing Latin.

THE ORIGINS OF HUMANISM

Robert Black

To the memory of Albinia (Tilly) de la Mare

Since the publication of Roberto Weiss's *The Dawn of Humanism in Italy*, "Lineamenti per una storia del primo umanesimo fiorentino" and *Il primo secolo dell'umanesimo*,¹ there has been general agreement that Italian humanism began in the second half of the thirteenth century. Following the example of his illustrious Italian positivist predecessors, Francesco Novati and Remigio Sabbadini, Weiss avoided theoretical discussions of causation, although he did point to "the prominent role of lawyers in starting humanism in Italy."² Weiss's contemporary, Paul Oskar Kristeller, combined the positivism of the German and Italian philological tradition with an interest in broader historical questions. It is scarcely necessary to dwell on his classic definition of humanism as a discipline (the so-called *studia humanitatis*),³ nor on his explanation for the origins of humanism as the union of the ultramontane, mainly French, medieval tradition of studying classical authors with Italian practical rhetoric (*ars dictaminis*).⁴ But both Weiss and Kristeller left their explanations of humanism's origins as tentative suggestions: Weiss never elaborated on how legal culture led to humanism, and Kristeller never explained how the French classical tradition was transplanted into Italy. Berthold Louis Ullman pointed to French and Italian cross-fertilization, so to speak, at Avignon in the early fourteenth century,⁵ but this, of course, was too late to account for the emergence of early humanism in the later thirteenth century.

¹ Roberto Weiss, *The Dawn of Humanism in Italy* (London, 1947; republished and revised, *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 42 [1969], 1–16); idem, "Lineamenti per una storia del primo umanesimo fiorentino," *Rivista storica italiana* 60 (1948), 349–66; idem, *Il primo secolo dell'umanesimo* (Rome, 1949).

² Weiss, *The Dawn of Humanism in Italy*, p. 3.

³ Paul O. Kristeller, "Humanism and Scholasticism in the Italian Renaissance" in idem, *Renaissance Thought and Its Sources* (New York, 1979; first pub. 1944), pp. 85–105.

⁴ Paul O. Kristeller, *Eight Philosophers of the Italian Renaissance* (Stanford, 1964), pp. 160–62.

⁵ Berthold L. Ullman, "Some Aspects of the Origin of Italian Humanism [first pub. 1941]," in idem, *Studies in the Italian Renaissance* (Rome, 1955), pp. 27–40; and idem, "The Sorbonne Library and the Italian Renaissance [first pub. 1953]," in *ibid.*, pp. 41–53.

Ronald Witt has recently published an important book aiming to fill in the details of Kristeller's hypothesis.⁶ It is problematic to analyze humanism's origins without a definition, and so Witt has highlighted Latin poetic style as the key feature of humanism:

My decision to center my discussion of humanism on stylistic change derives...from my conviction that a litmus for identifying a humanist was his intention to imitate ancient Latin style. At the least, a dedication to stylistic imitation initiated the destabilization of an author's own linguistic universe through his contact with that of antiquity. As a consequence, I do not regard as humanists those contemporaries who were engaged in historical and philological research on ancient culture but who showed no sign of seeking to emulate ancient style, but rather I consider them antiquarians.⁷

Both Kristeller's and Witt's definitions of humanism have their advantages and disadvantages. Witt's helps to identify the novel aims of the humanist movement and to distinguish humanists from their medieval forerunners, while Kristeller's tends to assimilate humanism with the medieval disciplines from which it emerged. Kristeller's, however, has the merit of embracing a wide range of activities, writers and scholars under the umbrella of a broad discipline. By applying his definition, signs of early humanism could be detected not only in the areas highlighted by Witt, such as Lovato Lovati's attempts to imitate classical verse forms or in Albertino Mussato's revival of Senecan tragedy, but also in Brunetto Latini's study and use of Ciceronian orations and rhetorical texts, in Bartolino di Benincasa's and Giovanni di Bonandrea's lectures on Ciceronian rhetorical handbooks, in Giovanni del Virgilio's teaching of the classical Latin poets, in Geri d'Arezzo's and Giovanni de Matociis's early efforts at critical literary history or in Geremia da Montagnone's and Benvenuto Campesani's reading of rare Latin authors such as Catullus and Martial. Witt's focus on Latin style as the "litmus" of humanism can lead to a preoccupation with distinguishing who were and who were not in fact the first humanists: his account can become less a history of humanism than of those figures who meet his criteria as humanists. Thus Witt rejects the humanist credentials of Geremia da Montagnone, despite his "knowledge of a wide range of ancient authors,"⁸ as well as those of Riccobaldo of Ferrara,⁹ Giovanni de Matociis and Benzo d'Alessandria.¹⁰

⁶ Ronald G. Witt, *In the Footsteps of the Ancients: The Origins of Humanism from Lovato to Bruni* (Leiden, 2000).

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 114.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

On the basis of his definition of humanism as a classicizing style, Witt goes on to recount its origins. Latin literacy thrived in north and central Italy for “the first five centuries following the fall of Rome... Broad strata of the general population had frequent contact with documents, and elementary Latin literacy seems to have been relatively widespread.” This Italian Latin literary culture reached its peak in the eleventh century but was shattered by the Investiture Contest at the end of the eleventh century.¹¹ According to Witt, classical studies in Italy lay dormant until the end of the twelfth century: the

fortunes of grammar revived after 1180, when a massive invasion of French scholarly and literary influences transformed the intellectual life of Italy north of Rome. At the height of their glory... French grammarians and poets made their major contribution to the brilliant future of letters and scholarship in Italy. After almost a century of playing an auxiliary role to rhetoric, grammatical studies required decades to revive; but the burst of Latin poetic composition in northern Italy by the middle of the thirteenth century shows their vigorous development by that time.¹²

Witt’s thesis regarding the origins of Italian humanism is that its seeds were sown at the end of the twelfth century but that they took nearly a hundred years (1180 to 1267–68) to germinate in the person of Lovato Lovati and his fellow Latin classicizing poets in the second half of the thirteenth century.

The purpose of this paper is to offer an alternative picture of humanism’s birth. The scope of humanism will not be limited to writers adopting a classicizing Latin style but will include wider rhetorical, philological and literary studies concerned with classical antiquity. It will be argued that classical studies continued to thrive in twelfth-century Italy but notably declined there in the thirteenth century; it will be suggested that humanism originated as a reaction to the ebb of classicism in thirteenth-century Italy; the connection between humanism and legal culture, first noticed by Weiss, will be highlighted as crucial to understanding humanism’s social context and origins; and it will be argued that humanism emerged as the ideology of the professional legal class attempting to assert its political and social position in Italian communes hitherto dominated by an aristocratic elite.

Interest in the Latin classics and particularly the study of the classical Latin authors dwindled in Italy during the sixth, seventh and eighth

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 14–16.

¹² Ibid., p. 17. See also R. Witt, “Medieval Italian Culture and the Origins of Humanism as a Stylistic Ideal,” in *Renaissance Humanism: Foundations, Forms, and Legacy*, ed. A. Rabil, 1 (Philadelphia, 1988), pp. 44–50.

centuries, and it was mainly in the ninth century that a significant revival of the ancient literary curriculum based on a study of classical authors was launched. The great Carolingian teachers and classicists were all north European figures but Italian centers and scholars now began to emerge. It was in the tenth century that the withdrawal from the Latin classics, so pronounced in Italian schools during the Dark Ages, was reversed in Italy, and during the eleventh century the study of classical Latin authors intensified.¹³ This process peaked in the twelfth century. According to Ronald Witt:

... in the twelfth century... one encounters instances of some knowledge of the ancient writers in northern and central Italy. Paul of Camaldoli's *Introductiones* written in the last half of the century¹⁴... indicates Paul's acquaintance with the standard Latin poets. [There is also] a twelfth-century Italian commentary on the *De inventione*...¹⁵

The clearest direct evidence here is the survival of classical Latin authors used as schoolbooks. It has been possible to identify 41 Italian manuscript texts of classical authors used as schoolbooks and produced in Italy during the twelfth century.¹⁶ These manuscript books are all found now in Florentine libraries, but, of course, they do not all originate from Florence

¹³ See Robert Black, *Humanism and Education in Medieval and Renaissance Italy. Tradition and Innovation in Latin Schools from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 175–85 for further bibliography.

¹⁴ “Le *Introductiones dictandi* di Paolo Camaldolese (testo inedito del sec. XII ex.)” in *Studi e ricerche dell'Istituto di Latino*, ed. V. Sivo, 3 (1980), pp. 69–100. See also “Le *Introductiones de notitia versificandi* di Paolo Camaldolese (testo inedito del sec. XII ex.)” *Studi e ricerche dell'Istituto di civiltà classica cristiana medievale* 5 (1982), 119–49.

¹⁵ Gian Carlo Alessio, “Brunetto Latini e Cicerone (e i dettatori),” *Italia medievale e umanistica* 22 (1979), 125–26, cited by Witt, “Medieval Italian Culture,” p. 66 n. 71. The following are some further twelfth-century Italian commented manuscripts of Ciceronian rhetorical texts that have been identified in Florentine libraries:

Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Pluteo 50.7 (*De inventione, Rhetorica ad Herennium*), glossed by a later twelfth-century hand.

Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Pluteo 50.10 (*De inventione, Rhetorica ad Herennium, Topica*), partly written in a Beneventan hand (eleventh/twelfth century), partly in Caroline minuscule (twelfth century), with twelfth-century glosses in Caroline minuscule to the beginning of *De inventione*.

Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Pluteo 50.43 (*De inventione, Rhetorica ad Herennium*), twelfth century possibly first half, central Italy, with twelfth-century glosses by the scribe to *De inventione*. This ms. contains a hitherto unidentified autograph *ex libris* of Poggio, visible only under ultraviolet light: [fol. 86r] Liber Poggii sec.¹ ap. Fl. 1 lr. L. 2. S. 16 [the cost of the book is added by a later cursive hand].

Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, Magliabechiano VI.175 (*De inventione, Rhetorica ad Herennium*), with some possible twelfth-century glosses.

¹⁶ Black, *Humanism and Education*, pp. 186–92.

or even Tuscany. The efforts of later Florentine humanists and collectors make these particular texts an important testimony to classical scholarly and teaching activity throughout Italy.¹⁷

The strong presence of Latin classical authors in twelfth-century Italy, as revealed by the Florentine census, can now be confirmed by a further continuing survey outside Florence. So far it has been possible to identify the following numbers of Italian manuscripts of classical Latin authors either produced or used as schoolbooks in twelfth-century Italy and now housed outside Florence: Cesena (1); Leeds (1); London (12); Mantua (1); Milan (18); Montecassino (4); Monza (1); Naples (8); Oxford (3); Padua (2); Pavia (4); Perugia (2); Poppi (1); Ravenna (1); Rome (11); Turin (5); Udine (2); Vatican City (41); Venice (8); Verona (1).¹⁸

Most of these textbooks would have been used at Italian ecclesiastical secondary schools during the twelfth century, and indeed two of them (copies of Cicero's *De amicitia* and of Sallust's *Bellum Iugurthinum*) actually contain references to contemporary episcopal and ecclesiastical life.¹⁹ According to Otto of Freising, the Lombards in the first half of the twelfth century retained "the elegance of the Latin language,"²⁰ and Roffredo da Benevento referred to the flourishing state of Latin literary study in Arezzo at the turn of the thirteenth century (*Frater, cum venisti ab Aretio ubi hodie viget studium litterarum*).²¹

¹⁷ At a recent symposium, Ronald Witt and I had a discussion about the significance of these 41 twelfth-century Florentine schoolbooks. Witt suggested that they were not representative of Italian education in general during the twelfth century, since Florentine collectors in the fifteenth century and afterwards acquired disproportionately large numbers of pre-Gothic manuscripts. Although such Florentine collectors did indeed gather a huge quantity of pre-thirteenth-century manuscripts throughout Italy and transalpine Europe, nevertheless these manuscripts came from somewhere; this fact suggests, not that the Florentine collections today are unrepresentative of Italy as a whole, but rather that they constitute a more accurate picture of the general Italian state of classical education in the twelfth century than if the Florentine collectors had limited themselves to Florence alone for their purchases.

¹⁸ See Appendix for the provisional results of this survey. Since it is generally agreed that Montecassino continued to flourish as a centre of classical scholarship in the twelfth century, this on-going census has been limited to manuscripts written in the Caroline script typical of Italy in general, rather than in the Beneventan script used exclusively in and near Montecassino.

¹⁹ Black, *Humanism and Education*, pp. 190–9 (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plutei 64.18 and 76.23).

²⁰ Trans. from *Gesta Fiderici* by U. Balzani, now in *The Portable Medieval Reader*, eds. J. B. Ross and M. McLaughlin (New York, 1949), p. 281.

²¹ Helene Wieruszowski, "Arezzo as a Center of Learning and Letters in the Thirteenth Century," in eadem, *Politics and Culture in Medieval Spain and Italy* (Rome, 1971; first pub. 1953), p. 390.

The classical tendencies of twelfth-century Italian education are further reflected in a rhetorical *summa* presented to St Martin's cathedral in Lucca by the city's bishop William (d. 1194). This textbook represents a sophisticated synthesis of *De inventione* and *Ad Herennium*.²² The "Lucca manuscript was put together from acknowledged experts...for the particular utility of the school for the canons...at the church of St. Martin at Lucca...where the donor [of the manuscript], before he became bishop, had been a canon and master of the schools."²³ In fact the Lucchese codex not only depicts classical practices in Tuscan rhetorical teaching during the twelfth century. The actual provenance of its rhetorical *summa* seems to have been Vicenza in North-East Italy,²⁴ and so it can be surmised that classical rhetorical theory was actively used in both North and Central Italy during the twelfth century.

A striking literary text written in twelfth-century Italy is Henry of Settimello's famous *Elegy*, the most significant piece of classicizing Latin poetry composed in Italy before Lovato and the emergence of Paduan humanism. It shows the direct influence of both Ovid's poetry of exile as well as of Boethius's *Consolation*. Echoes of Vergil and Horace are evident too; there are numerous references to the classical world, while biblical allusions are rare; Henry's stoic philosophy is possibly stimulated by Seneca. The question is what inspired Henry's neo-classicism. Henry was drawn to the French Latin poets of the twelfth century, such as Walter of Châtillon, Alain of Lille and Matthew of Vendôme, whose verse techniques and stylistic eccentricities he appropriated.²⁵ It has been suggested that "communication between France and Bologna must have been relatively intense in these years, because Walter's *Alexandreis*, from which Henry borrowed generously for stylistic purposes, had been composed only about a decade before the *Elegia* itself."²⁶ However, it can be wondered whether Henry came into contact with this text at Bologna, where he had been a student; after his student days Henry rose up the ecclesiastical hierarchy, only to be deprived of an important post, possibly by the Bishop of Florence—a loss which provided the stimulus for his poem.²⁷ If the date of the *Elegy* (1193), written in the

²² John O. Ward, *Ciceronian Rhetoric in Treatise, Scholion and Commentary* (Turnhout, 1995), pp. 124–25.

²³ F. Gastaldelli, "Note sul codice 616 della Biblioteca Capitolare di Lucca," *Salesianum* 39 (1977), 695, 702, cited by Ward, *Ciceronian Rhetoric*, p. 125.

²⁴ See Ward, *Ciceronian Rhetoric*, pp. 125–26 for the numerous geographical references to Vicenza in the text.

²⁵ A. Monteverdi, "Arrigo da Settimello," *DBI* 4 (Rome, 1962), pp. 315–16.

²⁶ Witt, "Medieval Italian Culture," p. 49.

²⁷ Monteverdi, "Arrigo da Settimello," p. 315.

wake of his displacement from high ecclesiastical office, is taken into account, Henry had possibly left Bologna to work in the diocese of Florence before the composition of *Alexandreis* (1182). Moreover, Henry's knowledge of French poetry seems to have been unique in Italy during the twelfth and earlier thirteenth century:

Henry joined the French poets in influencing a second Italian writer, Stefanardo di Vimercate, whose *De controversia hominis et fortuna* [ca. 1265] reflects both the mannerist style and French philosophical concerns. With only Henry and Stefanardo (d. 1297), one can hardly speak of a literary movement.²⁸

Henry of Settimello is the proverbial exception to the rule. Communication between Bologna and France was hardly intense in this period, if Henry is the only example of Gallic neo-classicism before Stefanardo. On the contrary, the chronology of Henry's biography suggests local Italian classical study, preparing the ground for a unique French fertilization culminating in his *Elegy*.

Indirect evidence for indigenous Italian twelfth-century classicism comes from the polemics of the eminent Bolognese professor of rhetoric, Boncompagno da Signa (c. 1165–c. 1240). Boncompagno declares that he had never imitated Cicero nor indeed ever lectured on him, and he goes on to reject his predecessors' methods of teaching the *ars dictaminis*, accusing them of too much reliance on the ancients: of the traditional five parts of the letter, only three were actually essential; if this was against the doctrine of the ancients, then their teachings had been useless and damaging. He derides the methods of writing letters before his day: masters had spent huge amounts of time adorning their epistles with vivid displays of verbiage and learned quotations from the authors, who were believed to provide the seal of approval for their literary productions. He even criticizes Cicero's theory as inept and self-contradictory. He says that he was reprimanded for rejecting the traditional practice of padding his prose with classical quotations (*proverbia*) and rarified terminology, complaining that he was ridiculed for lacking knowledge of Latin literature (*litteratura*), and for drawing examples from the present day. In the late twelfth century, the school of Orléans was particularly associated with the traditional study of the classical authors, and Boncompagno accuses his academic opponents of too much indulgence in Aurelianism.²⁹

²⁸ Witt, "Medieval Italian Culture," p. 49.

²⁹ Orléans = Aurelianum. For textual references, see Black, *Humanism and Education*, pp. 192–93; see also Ronald G. Witt, "Boncompagno and the Defense of Rhetoric" *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 16 (1986), 1–31.

What is important here is the geographical context of this battle for and against the ancient authors. The source of this classicism was to some extent French Aurelianism,³⁰ but crucial is the fact that Boncompagno presents himself as an innovator, revising the methods of his predecessors, to whom he constantly refers; Boncompagno was attempting to replace the kind of classical teaching practices traditionally employed in Italy, time-honored methods that had been sanctioned and reinforced by the authority and prestige of the school of Orléans. Boncompagno's self-advertisement as an innovator and a radical implies that classicism was flourishing, not declining in twelfth-century Italy.

It has been suggested that, in twelfth-century Italy, traditional literary culture was already being replaced by a new practical and professional educational movement:

The intellectual life of northern and central Italy in the twelfth century was largely driven by legal-rhetorical concerns and directed by *dictatores* and Roman and canon lawyers... The extent of grammar training was generally determined by the humble demands of *ars dictaminis*.³¹

It is true that, ultimately, *dictamen* resulted in a less classicized approach to rhetoric, but this anti-classical direction emerged only gradually in Italy. Alberic of Montecassino (d. 1105), usually seen as the parent of *ars dictaminis*, still focused on "the traditional rhetoric of the schools, that is, the forensic rhetoric of Cicero,"³² making use of "Sallust, Ovid, Lucan, Terence and especially Virgil" too.³³ Adalberto Samaritano (fl. 1115–25), often cited as first among Alberic's successors,³⁴ opened his *Praecepta dictaminum* with a pretentious "humanistic preface... derived from *De inventione* itself" as well as with a citation "from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*."³⁵ Even Bene da Firenze (fl. 1218–d. before 1242), Boncompagno's great rival at the University of Bologna, included

much from classical rhetorical theory... [His] *Candelabrum*... clearly has classical rhetorical theory in mind... Bene situates his subject in the general framework as taught in classical rhetorical theory... It is clear from Bene's

³⁰ Witt, "Medieval Italian Culture," p. 45.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 16–17.

³² M. Camargo, "Towards a Comprehensive Art of Written Discourse," *Rhetorica* 6 (1988), 169.

³³ Joseph M. Miller, Michael H. Prosser and Thomas W. Benson, eds., *Readings in Medieval Rhetoric* (Bloomington, 1973), p. 132.

³⁴ J. J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley, 1974), p. 211.

³⁵ John O. Ward, "Rhetorical Theory and the Rise and Decline of *Dictamen* in the Middle Ages and Early Renaissance," *Rhetorica* 19 (2001), 181.

account that the would-be *dictator* should read widely: “philosophos et autores”... All of this adds up to the *via dicendorum*, for which I think it perfectly reasonable to suppose that Bene would have expected his better students to read some of the *Rhetores latini minores*, Quintilian’s *Institutio oratoria*, Cicero’s *De inventione*, the *Ad Herennium*, the *artes poetriae* and similar texts.³⁶

It is misleading to see *ars dictaminis* and the study of the authors as mutually antagonistic in the twelfth-century; in that period it would have been impossible to dispense with the study of the classics and to truncate the traditional grammar course. *Dictamen* itself required a thorough practical working knowledge of Latin, not just an ability to read but also to write. Such skills were acquired through the time-honoured methods of grammar: mastery of the parts of speech followed by prose composition. Before the advent of the revolutionary new logical techniques developed at the University of Paris in the twelfth century and first brought down to the level of the grammar schoolroom by Alexander of Villedieu in 1199, the only way to learn prose composition was through total immersion in the Latin classics. Before the turn of the thirteenth century, there existed no abbreviated school-level method for learning to write Latin.³⁷ To see *dictamen* and the authors as conflicting is to read the situation of the thirteenth century into the educational world of the twelfth. The development of *dictamen* had to support and encourage the study of the authors until there emerged an alternative grammar method for teaching prose composition. It is essential not to confound the position of grammar and rhetoric in the curriculum: grammar always had to precede rhetoric; rhetoric, whether in the form of Ciceronian theory or *dictamen*, was never in itself an alternative to grammar. Grammar had itself to change (as in fact rapidly happened in the early thirteenth century)³⁸ before *dictamen* could be freed from the classical authors.

It is important to appreciate the revolutionary nature of Boncompagno’s program at the turn of the thirteenth century. Traditional Italian educators, whose approach might have been reinforced by Orleanist *dictatores* working in the papal curia,³⁹ now felt threatened by the new European-wide anti-classical current and so attacked Boncompagno as a prominent member of the *avant garde*;⁴⁰ in response, he highlighted his educational radicalism,

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 190–91.

³⁷ See Black, *Humanism and Education*, pp. 64–82.

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 82–98.

³⁹ Ronald Witt, “Boncompagno,” pp. 7–8 n. 16.

⁴⁰ For Boncompagno’s traditionalist critics, see *ibid.*, p. 1 n. 1.

vilifying the school of Orléans as the bastion of reactionary classicism. Boncompagno is in fact criticizing the traditional author-based approach to grammar and rhetoric which had long been practiced in Italian schools and which had underpinned the early development of *dictamen*, and which he now wanted to displace with a more rigidly practical training. The fact that Boncompagno strode forth as a modernizer onto the Italian educational scene suggests that there had been a traditional educational establishment long in existence when he was writing.

The early thirteenth century represented not a period of slowly rising classicism in Italy, but the collapse of traditional Italian classically based secondary education. One indication comes in a renowned French text of the early thirteenth century, Henri d'Andeli's *La bataille des .VII. ars*: among the forces ranged against grammar and the authors is rhetoric, marshalling many Lombard knights.⁴¹ The Lombards following rhetoric rode together with dialectic, wounding many honest enemies from the authorial camp.⁴² The authors are now abandoned; *artisti* and *canonisti* are removed from grammar's jurisdiction. Bretons and Germans still are under grammar's sway, but grammar would be throttled by the Lombards, given a chance.⁴³

This collapse of classical education in thirteenth-century Italy is confirmed by the above-mentioned survey of schoolbooks now housed in Florentine libraries. In comparison with the 41 manuscripts of classical Latin authors produced as schoolbooks in twelfth-century Italy, the figure for the next century drops to a total of only 10.⁴⁴ This pattern, to some extent, mirrors the drop in overall numbers of classical manuscripts being produced in Europe as a whole in the thirteenth century,⁴⁵ but the extremity of the fall suggests that the shift away from the classics was particularly cataclysmic in Italian schools of the Duecento. These results are further substantiated by the fragments recovered from reused earlier medieval texts now found in the Archivio di Stato of Udine.⁴⁶ Of the 241 fragments, there are the following numbers of classical Latin texts:

⁴¹ *The Battle of the Seven Arts. A French poem by Henry d'Andeli*, ed. L. Paetow (Berkeley, 1914), p. 43, lines 68–69.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 51, lines 224–225, 228–229.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 60, lines 444–449.

⁴⁴ Black, *Humanism and Education*, p. 192.

⁴⁵ See L. Reynolds, ed., *Texts and Transmission* (Oxford, 1983), p. xxvii, giving a drop of 50% in the overall number of manuscripts cited in the book (from 280 to 140) between the twelfth century and the thirteenth century.

⁴⁶ Cesare Scaloni, *Libri, scuole e cultura nel Friuli medioevale* (Padua, 1987).

	Lucan	Ovid	Sall.	Sen. Trag.	Stat.	Val. Max.	Verg.	Total
12c.	1		1					2
13c.								0
14c.	1	2		1	1	2	2	9

The overall pattern resembles the above-mentioned results for Florentine libraries, so further documenting the decline of the Latin classics in thirteenth-century Italy.

Francesco Bruni⁴⁷ has also considered the question of the classics in the thirteenth century in his treatment of Guido delle Colonne's *Historia destructionis Troiae* (begun in 1272, completed in 1287), where he highlights a disparaging attitude to the classical poets (Vergil, Ovid, Homer);⁴⁸ suggestive too is the reading of a *sententia* from the *Georgics* (I. 145–146), which, starting from Augusto Campana's insight that the line was not cited from the original text in the thirteenth century but rather from a reworking in *Pamphilus*, Bruni uses to suggest a distance from the classics in the thirteenth century.⁴⁹ He also points to evidence regarding Guittone d'Arezzo's indifference to the classics, based on readings of Dante's *De vulgari eloquentia* (II, VI 7–8) and *Inferno* X. 62–63 (supported by Boccaccio).⁵⁰ Ronald Witt seems to agree that classical studies were on the wane in Italy during the first half of the thirteenth century:

That no Italian commentary on an ancient author, the surest sign that the ancient author was being taught to students, can definitely be assigned to the period 1190–1250, raises the question of how extensively the ancient literary works were taught even after 1190, and even in Bologna.⁵¹

The causes of this decline in Italian classical studies during the thirteenth century were twofold. In the first place, there was a powerful anti-classical current flowing from France. One source was the new Parisian logical school of grammar, developed by teachers such as William of Conches and

⁴⁷ Francesco Bruni, "Boncompagno da Signa, Guido delle Colonne, Jean de Meung: metamorfosi dei classici nel Duecento," in *Retorica e poetica tra i secoli XII–XIV*, eds. C. Leonardi and E. Menestò (Perugia, 1988), pp. 79–108.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 89–92.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 105–106. Cf. A. Campana, "La citazione del *Pamphilus*," in *Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi Accursiani*, ed. Guido Rossi, 2 (Milan 1968), pp. 513–520.

⁵⁰ "Guido ebbe a sdegno Virgilio e gli altri poeti." Cited by Bruni, "Boncompagno da Signa," pp. 80–81, 107–108.

⁵¹ Witt, *In the Footsteps of the Ancients*, p. 35.

particularly Petrus Helias. This systematic and logical approach to language, as created by the twelfth-century Parisian grammarians, did not remain an esoteric branch of higher learning in the Middle Ages; on the contrary, it was brought down to the humbler levels of the educational hierarchy in the most decisive imaginable manner at the very turn of the thirteenth century. In 1199, Alexander of Villedieu composed what must be one of the most influential and innovatory works in the history of education: *Doctrinale*. One aim of this textbook was to provide a practical substitute for Priscian's *Institutiones*. *Doctrinale* had a further purpose in common with a number of other works composed at the turn of the thirteenth century: the displacement of the Roman classics from the school curriculum. This was not only an explicit objective of *Doctrinale* but also of Alexander's *Ecclesiale*, where he emerged as a declared opponent of the school of Orléans, famous for its classicism. Alexander's anti-classicism not only indicated a new direction for the literary side of the curriculum but also a new approach to the teaching of syntax in the classroom: the traditional method of immersion in the authors was to be put to one side, and replaced by grammar based on logic and philosophy. Alexander emerges not only as the arch-enemy of Orléans, but also as the champion of the new philosophy's home, Paris, where he had himself studied.⁵²

Although *Doctrinale* and the other great French verse grammar, Evrard of Béthune's *Graecismus* (1216), were both northern French works, they reached Italian schools rapidly in the thirteenth century. Conclusive evidence here comes from Italian grammars written in the thirteenth century.⁵³ Pietro da Isolella's *Summa*, datable to the thirteenth century, contains material taken from *Doctrinale* and *Graecismus*, as does Giovanni da Genoa's *Catholicon*, completed in 1286.⁵⁴ Most important is the testimony of the Piedmontese grammarian Mayfredo di Belmonte, who in 1225 composed a grammar in Vercelli, giving it the title of *Doctrinale*, in imitation of and homage to Alexander of Villedieu.⁵⁵ This new style Parisian grammar imported to Italy corresponds in its anti-classicism to the contemporary anti-classical verse textbook on rhetoric, Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria nova*, datable between 1208 and 1213, which may reflect possible teaching activity in Italy; moreover, it was the most influential treatise on rhetorical style in Italian schools from the time of its publication to the end of the fifteenth century. The kind of style Geoffrey taught had nothing to do with classical

⁵² For textual references, see Black, *Humanism and Education*, pp. 74–75.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 83–89

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 83–84.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 55 n. 131.

prose, but rather represented an abstract elegance; indeed, Geoffrey quoted no classical examples in his work.⁵⁶

The second cause was indigenous to Italy. The burgeoning Italian administrative, clerical, notarial, legal and academic classes could not be satisfied with the painfully slow traditional methods of artificial immersion in the authors; these were aspiring professionals with careers to pursue and quicker progress was needed. Fundamental here was the rise of the professional Italian universities concentrating on the study of the *ars dictaminis* and *notaria*, law and medicine. These put pressure on the grammar schools to streamline their curricula, focusing on practical and rapid learning of Latin and eliminating the redundant study of Latin literature, previously at the heart of the grammar syllabus. Indeed, in place of the authors there now burgeoned practical manuals for the study of secondary Latin in thirteenth-century Italy, a genre which had hardly before existed south of the Alps. The thirteenth century saw the first great flowering of Italian grammatical studies; this was also a period in which many copies were made in Italy of Alexander's *Doctrinale* and Evrard's *Graecismus*.⁵⁷ In some sense, the latter two works came to serve a dual purpose in thirteenth-century Italy: on the one hand, they reinforced previous grammatical knowledge, providing rules and lists in an easily memorized verse format; on the other, they provided a type of substitute for the study of the authors themselves, and were accordingly glossed repeatedly in the traditional school manner, as soon as they made their appearance in Italy.

If collapsing, not rising, classicism was the prevailing culture of Italian education in the early thirteenth century, how then can the emergence of humanism beginning with Lovato later in that same century be explained? Here the rise of French and vernacular poetry in early thirteenth-century Italy is crucial. This period is famous for the birth of the Italian literary vernacular, and this movement corresponds to the anti-classicism characteristic of Italian grammar and rhetoric teaching in schools and universities at the same time. What Lovato's humanism represented was a reaction against the overwhelming anti-classicism of the preceding generations, as typified by vernacular and Franco-Veneto poetry:

Lovato dei Lovati... implied that the popularity of vernacular poetry spurred him to write Latin poetry out of a spirit of competition. So he suggested in a letter that he wrote about 1290 to his friend, Bellino Bissolo, a Latin poet who, perhaps only for the purpose of argument, was apparently willing to champion

⁵⁶ Ibid., pp. 342–49.

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 82–83.

the vernacular against Lovato's criticisms. Lovato told Bellino . . . he had come across a singer . . . "bellowing the battles of Charlemagne and French exploits" in French, "gaping in barbarous fashion, rolling them out as he pleased, no part of them in their proper order, songs relying on no effort." Nevertheless, the listeners had hung on every word.

While recognizing the wisdom of maintaining the middle course between writing verses for the few and for the many, Lovato declared that "if you must err on one side, it should be on the side of daring" . . . The obvious reference here was to his intention to write his poetry in Latin as opposed to the vernacular.

Do you despise him [the courageous poet] because he believes that one must follow in the footsteps of the ancient poets (*veterum vestigia vatum*) . . . I won't change my mind. I stand fast, as is my habit, and I won't correct the vice of my long disease.

This letter of ca. 1290 conveys the elitism of Lovato, who looked down on vernacular literature as inferior to Latin . . . Although the immediate antagonist was French poetry—Provençal poetry commonly enjoyed higher status—given Lovato's loyalty to the *veterum vestigia vatum*, there can be no doubt that he considered Provençal poetry also inferior to Latin verse. More generally, the letter indicates the creative tension between vernacular and Latin poetry at the dawn of humanism and injects an element of competition into the mixture of causes leading to the rise of a new Latin poetry around 1250.⁵⁸

It is right to see Lovato's humanism as a reaction, one, however, which was not just against the vernacular but also opposed to the anti-classicism of the entire "secolo senza Roma," to quote Toffanin,⁵⁹ or "l'exil des belles lettres," in the words of Gilson.⁶⁰

Some scholars, looking beyond style and imitation for indications of burgeoning classicism, have focused on the development Ciceronian rhetorical theory. "In the second half of the thirteenth century," wrote James Banker, "Ciceronian rhetoric began to play a more prominent role in certain Italian writers' understanding of persuasion . . . Brunetto Latini in the 1260s revived the precepts of Cicero's teaching."⁶¹ For Virginia Cox, the

⁵⁸ Witt, *In the Footsteps of the Ancients*, pp. 53–54.

⁵⁹ Giuseppe Toffanin, "Il secolo senza Roma," in idem, *Storia dell'umanesimo dal XIII al XVI secolo* (Città di Castello, 1933).

⁶⁰ Étienne Gilson, *Philosophie au Moyen Âge* (Paris, 1962), pp. 400–12.

⁶¹ James Banker, "Giovanni di Bonandrea's *Ars Dictaminis* Treatise and the Doctrine of Invention in the Italian Rhetorical Tradition of the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries" (Ph.D. diss., University of Rochester, 1971), pp. 110 and 300, cited by Ward, "Rhetorical Theory," p. 196.

later thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries in Italy saw a marked new interest in the study of Ciceronian rhetorical theory, in both Latin and vernacular contexts...in defiance of recent Italian traditions of rhetorical instruction, both [Brunetto Latini's *Rettorica* and Bono Giamboni's *Fiore di rettorica*] are based more or less directly on classical Roman sources...it seems justifiable to speak of a classicizing reorientation of the medieval Italian rhetorical tradition in this period.⁶²

John Ward accepts their emphasis on Latini's originality, speaking of his "revival of classical rhetorical theory": "Brunetto appreciated the limitations of *dictamen* theory...and the need for classical rhetorical theory."⁶³

Cox is disinclined

to interpret this turn towards Ciceronian rhetoric as a protohumanistic phenomenon. There is a certain superficial appeal to this suggestion. The history of the study of Ciceronian rhetoric may be relatively neatly aligned with that of the study of classical literary texts, which, having enjoyed a first phase of intense cultivation in eleventh- and twelfth-century France,...was then taken up with enthusiasm in late thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Italy...It would be mistaken, however, to make too much of these parallels between the literary and rhetorical cases. The French classicizing rhetorical learning of the twelfth century was transplanted in Italy into a powerful existing rhetorical culture, closely bound up with Italian political and civic life and distinguished by its modernizing, utilitarian character. There was little place in this rhetorical-political culture for that impulse to a formal emulation of classical models which is the distinguishing trait of Italian humanism.⁶⁴

Instead, Cox sees as crucial "the increasing prominence within the civic culture of the Italian communes of practices of oral and adversarial rhetoric which the dominant instrument of rhetorical instruction in this period, the *ars dictaminis*, was ill-equipped to teach."⁶⁵

There is no doubt that the adversarial, oral debate and speech-making characteristic of Italian city life made classical rhetorical theory more attractive in the later thirteenth-century, but this can be only part of the story. Public debate—whether in general assemblies of the people or in communal councils—had been a feature of Italian civic life since the emergence of the communes at the beginning of the twelfth century, and yet it was only after 1250 that Ciceronian rhetoric, with its adversarial bias, was revived.⁶⁶ There is also no surviving evidence of rhetorical practice in communal assemblies

⁶² Virginia Cox, "Ciceronian Rhetoric in Italy, 1260–1350," *Rhetorica* 17 (1999), 239–40.

⁶³ Ward, "Rhetorical Theory," pp. 201–02.

⁶⁴ Cox, "Ciceronian Rhetoric," pp. 247–48.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 239.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 259–60.

from the later thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries to substantiate a connection between classical rhetorical theory and adversarial communal debating: “we have no reliable documentary evidence of the form that council speaking is likely to have assumed.”⁶⁷ It is important not to place too much emphasis on the divergence between classical adversarial rhetoric and *dictamen*; indeed, the weakness of adversarial rhetoric in *dictamen* can be exaggerated: noteworthy here are adversarial debates in dictaminal collections by Matteo de’ Libri, the *Oculus pastoralis* and Giovanni da Vignano’s *Flore del parlare*.⁶⁸ Such distinctions, moreover, can overlook the subjective appeal of the classics. Classical rhetoric (as well as the classical prose and poetry in general) may have had a powerful symbolic, emblematic attraction for a writer such as Latini. The chronological concurrence between the return to Cicero on the part of Latini, Jacques de Dinant, Giovanni di Bonandrea and Bartolino di Benincasa, and the revival of interest in other classical authors evident in Lovato, Mussato, Geri, Riccobaldo, Geremia, Giovanni de Matociis, Benevenuto Campesani and Benzo is too striking to be dismissed as mere coincidence.

The ups and downs of the classical heritage from antiquity itself until the Renaissance and beyond were seldom isolated from wider cultural, social and historical currents. The decline of classical learning and education in the sixth and seventh centuries—associated as it was with efforts by the likes of Gregory the Great or St Benedict to purge early medieval society of the vestiges of paganism⁶⁹—or the reversal in the twelfth-century Renaissance—brought about by the triumphant lay culture of the communes and the rise of the civic professional classes—are two prominent illustrations of how the fortunes of the classical heritage were part of the broader historical mainstream. In considering the birth of humanism, too much emphasis on literary dimensions can obscure its wider context. One needs to ask what motivated the early humanists to turn their backs on contemporary thirteenth and fourteenth-century culture. It has to be considered whether there was a social and political context to early humanism, indeed to what extent the birth of humanism had ideological resonances.

In this context, perhaps one should recall the above-mentioned passage demonstrating Lovato’s rejection of the vernacular in favour of a return to antique Latinity. Lovato contrasted a singer “...bellowing the battles of Charlemagne and French exploits” in French, “gaping in barbarous fashion,”

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 260.

⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 256–57.

⁶⁹ See Black, *Humanism and Education*, pp. 175–77 for further bibliography.

with “[the courageous poet]... [who] believes that one must follow in the footsteps of the ancient poets (*veterum vestigia vatum*).” Brunetto Latini could proudly identify with Cicero, the new man who rose to confront the conspiratorial Catiline: “Tullius was a new citizen of Rome and not of great stature; but through his wisdom he rose to such eminence that all Rome was commanded by his words.”⁷⁰ Latini’s formulation recalls Sallust’s description of Cicero as *homo novus*, previously passed over for the consulate owing to the *invidia* and *superbia* of the *nobilitas*;⁷¹ Sallust’s anti-aristocratic, pro-popular sentiments complemented Cicero’s own *arriviste* biography, giving classical history and literature a powerful social resonance in mid thirteenth-century Italy.⁷² For both Lovato and Latini a return to classical authors or classical language was connected with antipathy to contemporary aristocratic society dominated by courtly mores and hierarchical values; in both cases, one may detect a reaction against the political dominance of the aristocratic elite in the Italian communes.

Lovato rejected the contemporary vernacular, at least in part, because of its associations with the upper echelons of the social order, and likewise it could be argued that Latini favoured classical rhetorical theory over medieval *dictamen* for similarly anti-hierarchical motives. The *ars dictaminis* added a new section to the Ciceronian doctrine of the parts of a rhetorical composition: the *salutatio* ‘greeting.’ Classical orations began with an *exordium* ‘introduction’ whose purpose was to win the audience’s sympathy through various standard arguments (for example, by assuming false modesty [*topos humilis*]), but medieval *dictamen* predisposed the recipient of a letter by deferring to rank, as spelled out in the salutation. The *ars dictaminis* tended to devalue the *exordium* at the expense of the *salutatio*, whereas classical rhetorical theory assumed that neither speaker

⁷⁰ Brunetto Latini, *La rettorica*, I.16, ed. F. Maggini (Florence 1915), p. 8: “Tulio era cittadino di Roma nuovo e di non grande altezza; ma per lo suo senno fue in sì alto stato che tutta Roma si tenea alla sua parola.” The translation is my own. See Patricia J. Osmond, “Catiline in Fiesole and Florence: The After-Life of a Roman Conspirator,” *International Journal for the Classical Tradition* 7 (2000), 15–18.

⁷¹ Sallust, *Bellum Catilinae*, XXIII.5–6.

⁷² In his article, “Brunetto Latini and Dante” in his *Dante’s Italy and Other Essays* (Philadelphia, 1984), p. 177, Charles Davis pointed out that, in the *Fet des Romains*, Latini “could find a description of Cicero as a new citizen of Rome scorned by ‘the nobles of the city’...”, citing Francesco Maggini’s *I primi volgarizzamenti dai classici latini* (Florence, 1952), pp. 35–39: “Maggini has said that though for short quotations Brunetto sometimes goes directly to the Latin text of Sallust, for longer ones he relies on the version of the *Fet*.” What is significant here is that, although it is unclear whether Latini used Sallust directly for the information that Cicero was a new man opposed by the Roman nobility, nevertheless he had read Sallust’s original text and should have been sympathetic to Sallust’s anti-aristocratic interpretation of Cicero and the Catiline conspiracy.

nor audience commanded authority through standing; it was argument that counted.⁷³ Latini rejected his predecessors' devaluation of the *exordium*, restoring its full treatment according to the norms of classical rhetorical theory, and it is tempting again to see Latini's wider anti-hierarchical sympathies at work here.

What were the social backgrounds of the first humanists? Latini, son of a notary from the Florentine *contado*, was Florentine chancellor to the popular regime of the *primo popolo*, exiled after the return of the Florentine aristocrats to power in 1260, but subsequently enjoying a prominent political role in the popular guild regime established after 1282.⁷⁴ Lovato "was the son of Rolando di Lovato, a notary, and his brother Alberto was also a notary; the fact that the family name established itself only in Lovato's generation suggests that the family background was a modest one."⁷⁵ Geri d'Arezzo, the son of a notary, was similarly a lawyer from a humble Aretine family, who never even developed a surname.⁷⁶ "Mussato was of poor and humble origins; his acknowledged father was... a court messenger who lived in the northern suburbs of Padua."⁷⁷ All the figures associated with humanism from 1260 to 1350 emerged from the notarial/legal class:

...almost all were self-made men. Zambono d'Andrea and Lovato belonged to the class of *popolani* who had somehow made good during the years of Ezzelino [da Romano]'s tyranny; Rolando da Piazzola's background was apparently similar. Mussato's origins were even more humble and his sense of insecurity was exacerbated by the heights to which he rose and the rumours concerning his illegitimacy. The only exception to this pattern within the group was Geremia da Montagnone, the author of an important *florilegium* showing humanist influences, who belonged to an old feudal family which had descended socially into the administrative class.⁷⁸

Significant in this context is Latini's view of true nobility. Charles Davis writes,

His study of Cicero and other classical authors furnished him with a civic and moral ideal that was in harmony with the theory of nobility that he found in twelfth- and thirteenth-century French writers. Like them, he maintained that nobility was dependent not on birth or wealth but on virtue...⁷⁹

⁷³ Banker, "Giovanni di Bonandrea's *Ars Dictaminis*," as cited by Ward, "Rhetorical Theory," pp. 200–1; Cox, "Ciceronian Rhetoric," pp. 265–271.

⁷⁴ On Latini's strong popular affiliations and his powerful anti-aristocratic sentiments, see John Najemy, "Brunetto Latini's *Politica*," *Dante Studies* 112 (1994), 33–52.

⁷⁵ J. K. Hyde, *Padua in the Age of Dante* (Manchester, 1966), p. 134.

⁷⁶ For Geri's biography, see Weiss, *Il primo secolo* (above, n. 1), pp. 57–59.

⁷⁷ Hyde, *Padua*, pp. 165–66.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

⁷⁹ Davis, "Brunetto Latini and Dante," p. 180.

As Davis points out, Latini here was drawing on two French sources, William Peraldus's *Summa virtutum ac vitiorum*: "And... a man is called noble on account of his noble and virtuous deeds, and from this is born originally the nobility of a gentle race, and not from ancestors, for to have a vulgar heart and high lineage is to be an earthen vessel gilded outside with gold."⁸⁰ He also used William of Conches's *Moralium dogma philosophorum*: "if [nobles] themselves do not perform virtuous deeds, do not realize that they are disgraced rather than honored by the fame of their forebears."⁸¹ In this latter passage, Davis points out⁸² that Latini made two additions to his source (here indicated in italics):

*And those who delight in a noble lineage and boast of lofty ancestors, if they themselves do not perform virtuous deeds, do not realize that they are disgraced rather than honored by the fame of their forebears. For when Catiline conspired secretly at Rome, he did nothing but evil, and when he spoke before the senators of the uprightness of his father and the nobility of his line and the good it had brought to the city of Rome, he certainly spoke more to his shame than to his honor.*⁸³

Latini's additions not only indicate "the importance of the Cicero-Catiline episode in forming his view of nobility"⁸⁴ but suggest as well the personal resentment he harbored against the contemporary aristocracy's monopoly of political power and social prestige in the Italian communes on the basis of birthright alone. It is hard not to see Latini carrying the proverbial "chip on the shoulder": there seems little doubt that, for Latini, Cicero and Sallust were allies in a struggle against aristocratic privilege.

Even more revealing is a letter written by another early humanist, Geri d'Arezzo, to a fellow lawyer, Gerardo da Castelfiorentino:

I do not admire Caesar less when I read his writings than when I read of his wars. For as a writer he had little assistance, whereas as a warrior he relied on many others. As conqueror of the world he caused the most bellicose foreign nations and regions to tremble, extending his empire to the seas and his fame to the stars, but with his *Commentaries on the Gallic Wars*, which he composed over ten years, he outdid other writers, however prolific, with his artful and lofty style. Nor did such a prince think it less valuable to write something that was worth reading than to achieve something that was worth recounting. He thought he was wasting his time if he was neither fighting nor writing. And if people want to find out more, they ought to read Suetonius's

⁸⁰ Latini, *Tresor* 2.54, based on Peraldus, 1.3, p. 19; Davis, p. 183 (for the translation) and n. 75 (for the source).

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 180–81.

⁸² Davis, "Brunetto Latini and Dante," p. 181 and n. 56.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 180–81.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 181 n. 56.

Lives of the Caesars and the eloquent orations delivered by Cicero to Caesar, indeed all Roman history, and then they will discover how antiquity, following the superstitious rituals of those times, justifiably consecrated Julius Caesar as one of the gods. Our age, in contrast, Gerardo, has begotten men so proud of their long pedigrees that they consider Latin learning a waste of time, despising a ruler if they discover he devotes himself to study: deeply misguided, in my view, they consider knowledge inimical to arms. I do not mention kings and emperors, to whom fortune either grants or denies pardon; I limit myself to the lesser ranks of men, who are distinguished by the word “nobility”, not true nobility, which consists only and uniquely of spiritual virtue, but rather by the fictitious and false variety derived in one way or another from the accumulation of antique lineage and wealth. How are they dignified by intellectual achievement, by generous display of virtue, by good morals? They do not consider this quotation [from Juvenal]:

What avail your pedigrees? What boots it, Ponticus, to be valued for one’s ancient blood, and to display the painted visages of one’s forefathers—an Aemilianus standing in his car . . . if in the presence of the Lepidi you live an evil life?⁸⁵

The men of our day think it adequate if they follow barking dogs into the woods or if they waste their time hawking, smug and self-satisfied with the fame of their lineage alone. Not that I condemn physical exercise when the mind is stimulated by bodily exertion. But I should like such aristocrats, when they devote themselves to mental activity, to prize Latin literature, to cultivate and exercise virtue, so that they have no need for further moral improvement. While hunting, writing-equipment is not out of place, as I read of the Younger Pliny of Verona, the distinguished orator, whose style I am mad about, and who, while seated with fishing nets, while hunting wild boar, while wielding hunting-spears, passed his time in this way. He said that leisure during the hunt is a great incitement to thought, and that Diana, no less than Minerva, was wont to wander through mountains. But while meandering thus without restraint, I do not want to write a satire, although it would not be difficult to do so in this century, so lacking are we in men of quality.⁸⁶

Striking here is not only animosity towards the pursuits and pretensions of the contemporary aristocracy, but also the use of classical writers and history to justify the literary and learned activities of the non-noble literary and professional classes. It is difficult not to see early humanism as an ideology justifying the political and social aspirations of the legal class to which Lovato, Latini and Geri belonged.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Juvenal, *Satire* VIII.1–3, 9, trans. G. G. Ramsay (London and Cambridge, MA, 1965), p. 159.

⁸⁶ Published by Weiss, *Il primo secolo*, pp. 120–21; my translation.

⁸⁷ On the rise of the middle classes (*popolo*) in the Italian communes during the thirteenth century, see Lauro Martines, *Power and Imagination: City-States in Renaissance Italy* (New York, 1979), pp. 55–78.

APPENDIX

PRELIMINARY HANDLIST OF NON-BENEVENTAN
 MANUSCRIPTS OF LATIN CLASSICAL SCHOOL AUTHORS
 PRODUCED AND/OR USED AS SCHOOLBOOKS IN ITALY
 DURING THE TWELFTH CENTURY AND NOW FOUND
 OUTSIDE FLORENCE

The following handlist represents the latest stage of an on-going census of Latin classical manuscript school authors produced and/or used in Italy during the twelfth century. It complements the handlist of the same manuscript type preserved in Florentine libraries and published in my *Humanism and Education*, pp. 186–191.

The manuscripts listed in this census have been seen personally (with the exception of the two fragments from Udine, where I have relied on published plates). In dating these manuscripts, I have found the following features particularly useful for indicating twelfth-century origin: (1) the alternate use of the ampersand and 7-shaped “et”; (2) the presence of ct ligatures; (3) diphthongs normally indicated with a cedilla; (4) the tendency to abandon the slanted *ductus* characteristic of eleventh-century Caroline script in favour of a more perpendicular *ductus*; (5) “g” still formed with a separated lower loop. One of these manuscripts is dated 1192 (British Library Add. 35109) and its features are indicative of the changes in writing style coming with the thirteenth century: no ct ligatures, no diphthongs, no ampersands and a “g” with the lower loop compressed onto the upper loop. As far as Italian localization is concerned, the following characteristics have emerged as significant: (1) the use of pigskin (typically yellowed and pliable with groups of three hair-holes) rather than the more brittle and grey sheepskin favored in Northern Europe; (2) the preference for the Southern-style abbreviation for qui (“q” with a horizontal stroke below the line through the vertical stroke [here indicated as “qui = q̄”]), rather than the Northern-style abbreviation (q followed or capped by “i” suprascript); (3) the existence of Italian thirteenth-century glosses, beginning to employ the more individual and more easily identifiable features of Italian gothic script; (4) the absence of post-twelfth-century Northern European glossing (often characterized by the 7-shaped “et” crossed with a horizontal line and not found in Italian hands). In general, Italian twelfth-century Caroline script already tends to be less angular and more rounded than its Northern counterpart, but angularity/rotundity has not always proved to be a useful distinguishing feature: a number of these manuscripts have indubitable

Italian thirteenth-century gothic or *cancelleresca* glosses, implying Italian origin, and yet their script can be notably angular. Such manuscripts have sometimes been considered French productions, when they appear often to come from North Italy, where North European and particularly French influence was strong in the twelfth century (and thereafter). It has sometimes been possible to localize manuscripts to North Italy through the incorrect use of double consonants.

The following abbreviations have been used for classical authors:

Cicero	<i>O = De officiis, A = De amicitia, SS = Somnium Scipionis, P = Paradoxa stoicorum, DT = Disputationes Tusculanae</i>
Claudian	<i>De raptu Proserpinae</i>
Horace	<i>A = Ars poetica, S = Sermones, E = Epistulae, CS = Carmen saeculare, Epo. = Epodes, O = Carmina</i>
Ovid	<i>M = Metamorphoses, H = Heroides, F = Fasti, T = Tristia</i>
ps. Cicero	<i>I = Invectiva in Sallustium</i>
ps. Sallust	<i>I = Invectiva in Ciceronem</i>
Sallust	<i>BC = Bellum Catilinae, BJ = Bellum Iugurthinum</i>
Statius	<i>A = Achilleis, T = Tebais</i>
Terence	<i>E = Eunuchus</i>
Vergil	<i>A = Aeneis, E = Ecloga, G = Georgica</i>

The following other abbreviations have been used:

<i>Manuscripts</i>	<i>Les manuscrits classiques latins de la Bibliothèque Vaticane.</i>
<i>latins</i>	Catalogue établi par Élisabeth Pellegrin et François Dolbeau, Jeannine Fohlen et Jean-Yves Tilliette, avec la collaboration d'Adriana Marucchi et de Paolo Scarcia Piacentini (Paris, 1975–1991).
Mazzatinti	G. Mazzatinti et al. <i>Inventari dei manoscritti delle biblioteche d'Italia</i> (Forlì, 1890).
MO	Birger Munk Olsen, <i>L'étude des auteurs classiques latins aux IX^e et XII^e siècles</i> (Paris, 1982–89).
Petrucci, "Censimento" I	A. Petrucci, "Censimento dei codici dei secoli XI–XII," <i>Studi medievali</i> , 3rd ser., 9 (1968), 1115–1194.
Petrucci, "Censimento" II	A. Petrucci, "Censimento dei codici dei secoli XI–XII," <i>Studi medievali</i> , 3rd ser., 11 (1970), 1013–1133.
NN	not numbered

Shelf mark	Text(s)	Date	Origin	School use
Cesena, Biblioteca Malatestiana				
S XXV 2 ⁸⁸	Horace <i>Opera</i>	XI/XII	Italy	XI/XII–XIV
Leeds, Brotherton Library				
Brotherton				
Collection ms. 2 ⁸⁹	Cicero <i>O</i>	XII ¹	Italy	XII ² –XV
London, British Library				
Add. 11944 ⁹⁰	Sallust <i>BC, BJ</i>	XII ²	Italy	XII ² , XIII
Add. 11989 ⁹¹	Lucan	XII mid	Italy	XII, XIII, XV
Add. 35019 ⁹²	Sallust <i>BC, BJ</i>	1192	Italy	XIlex., XV
Harley 2533 ⁹³	Vergil <i>E, G</i>	XII ²	Italy	XII–XV
Harley 2609 ⁹⁴	Horace <i>O</i>	XII mid	Italy	XII
Harley 2656 ⁹⁵	Terence	XII mid	Italy	XII
Harley 5204 ⁹⁶	Cicero <i>SS</i>	XII ex.	Italy	XII ex. (?)
Harley 5412 ⁹⁷	Sallust <i>BC, BJ</i>	XII ²	Italy	XII ² , XIV (?)
Harley 5443 ⁹⁸	Terence	XII mid	Italy	XII, XV
King's				
Collection 26 ⁹⁹	Ovid <i>M</i>	XII ²	Italy	XII–XV
Royal 15 B XVII ¹⁰⁰	Juvenal	XI/XII	Italy	XI–XIII, XV
Royal 15 B XVIII ¹⁰¹	Juvenal	XI ²	Italy	XII

⁸⁸ G. M. Muccioli, *Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum Malatestianae Bibliothecae fratrum minorum conventualium*, II (Cesena, 1784), pp. 163–64 (“fortasse...s. XII”); R. Zazzeri, *Sui codici e libri a stampa della Biblioteca Malatestiana di Cesena. Ricerche e osservazioni* (Cesena, 1887), pp. 458–59 (“s. XII”); MO (“XI/XII,” “Italie”). qui = q, Italian XIIIc. glossing.

⁸⁹ J. A. Symington, *The Brotherton Library* (Leeds, 1931), p. 3, illustration p. XVI [NN] (XII); N. R. Ker, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain. A List of Surviving Books* (London, 1964²), p. 57 (XII, “written in Italy and there in s. XV”); R. H. Martin, “A Twelfth-Century Manuscript of Cicero’s *De Officiis*,” *The Classical Quarterly*, n.s., 45 (1951), 35–38 (XII); MO (XII, “Italie”). qui = q, XIIIc. Italian *cancelleresca*-type glosses.

⁹⁰ E. Pellegrin, *La bibliothèque des Visconti et des Sforza* (Paris, 1955), p. 363; MO (“XII ex.”; “Italie”). A little interlinear Italian XIIIc. glossing (fol. 37r, 43v, 54r–v).

⁹¹ MO (“XII in,” “Italie”). XIIIc. notarial cursive Italian glossator also using qui = q.

⁹² MO (1192; “Italie”); copyist: “Milus notarius”; MO gives the dated colophon: I, p. 329. qui = q.

⁹³ MO (“Italie?,” XII²). XIIIc. Italian glossator using qui = q.

⁹⁴ MO (XII); Pellegrin (cited by MO: “Espagne ou Italie”). qui = q.

⁹⁵ MO (XII, “type meridionale?”). qui = q in one XIIc. glossator.

⁹⁶ MO (XII ex., “Italie”). qui = q, Italian XII and XIVc. glosses.

⁹⁷ MO (XII², “Italie”). qui = q.

⁹⁸ MO (XII; “Italie”). qui = q.

⁹⁹ MO (XII²; “Italie”). Italian XIIIc. and later glossators. qui = q.

¹⁰⁰ MO (XI; “Italie”). 7-shaped et strongly predominates over ampersand; no ct ligatures; diphthongs indicated with cedilla. Italian XIIIc. glosses. qui = q.

¹⁰¹ MO (XI; “Italie?”). XIIIc. Italian notarial/*cancelleresca* glosses: fol. 48v–49r. qui = q.

Shelf mark	Text(s)	Date	Origin	School use
Mantua, Biblioteca Comunale				
322 (C.III.2) ¹⁰²	Vergil <i>A</i>	XI	Italy	XII
Milan, Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense				
AG.XI.29 ¹⁰³	Statius <i>T</i>	XII ²	N. Italy	XIII ¹
Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana				
A 79 inf. ¹⁰⁴	Vergil <i>Opera</i>	XII ¹	Italy	XII, XV
D 12 inf. ¹⁰⁵	Horace <i>Opera</i>	XII ex.	Italy	XII ex.–XV
E 52 sup. ¹⁰⁶	Horace <i>Opera</i>	XII ²	Italy	XIII ² , XV
E 74 sup. ¹⁰⁷	Ovid <i>F</i>	XII ²	N. Italy, possibly Padua	XII ² , XIII ²
F 42 sup. ¹⁰⁸	Cicero <i>O</i>	XII ²	Italy	XIV ¹
F 83 sup. ¹⁰⁹	Lucan	XII ²	Italy	XII ²
H 3 sup. ¹¹⁰	Cicero <i>SS</i>	XII mid/2	N. Italy	XII
H 115 sup. ¹¹¹	Vergil <i>A</i>	XII ¹	Italy	XII, XV
H 140 inf. ¹¹²	Cicero <i>O</i>	XII ex.	Italy	XIII

¹⁰² MO (XI; “Italie”). Fol. IVv, XIIc. hand: exacta = exquisita, where qui = q.

¹⁰³ Not in MO. Fol. 98r–108v: restoration of end of text by XIII² Italian hand. Consonant non-duplication: (fol. 16v): opem = oportunitatem.

¹⁰⁴ MO (XII¹; “Italie”). XIIIc. Italian glosses (fol. 2r, 17v).

¹⁰⁵ MO (XII/XIII; “Italie”). XIIIc. Italian glosses.

¹⁰⁶ MO (XII ex.; “Italie du Nord [?]”). XIII² Italian glosses.

¹⁰⁷ MO (XII ex.; “France?”). Italian origin indicated through use of pigskin with typical three-hole hair marks, through copious glosses by an Italian XIII² glossator and through early XIVc. historical references to N. Italy (fol. 59r: MCCCXI^o die XV^o aprilis gens imperatoris Henrici habuit Vincentium Paduanis expulssis. MCCCXIII de mense septembris Canis de Scalla vicit Paduanos in Burgo Sancti Petri. MCCCXX de mense augusti Canis fuit victus ad Bassanelum per Henricum Comitem Gu^{ce} (?). MCCCXXVIII de mense septembris Carrariensses dederunt Paduam Cani de Scalla. MCCCXXIX de mense iulii. Obiit Canis de la Scalla XXII^o dicti mensis iulii.) written by a hand contemporaneous with events (evidently from Padua; consonant duplications indicate N. Italian provenance).

¹⁰⁸ MO (XII²; “Midi de la France?”). Fol. 1r–10r: sometimes dense interlinear and occasional marginal glosses by one or more XIVin. Italian hands; Italian vernacular verses written in mid-XIVc *cancellaresca* hand (fol. 36v: inc. Se la fortuna fà fato segnore).

¹⁰⁹ MO (XII²; “France”). Several XIIIc. Italian annotators (fol. IIIv, 3r, 4v, 42r, 49v–50r) including XIII² Italian notarial cursive glossator (5v, 8v, 11v, 12r, 13v, 14r, 17r, 17v) as well as another XIII² Italian annotator (62r) and a little XV¹ Italian cursive glossing (14v–15r, 34v).

¹¹⁰ MO (XII¹). Purchased as part of the Biblioteca Pinelli by Cardinal Borromeo for the Ambrosiana (see A. Rivolta, *Catalogo dei codici pinelliani dell’Ambrosiana* [Milan, 1933], p. 21, number 40). At least two brief Italian XVc. interventions [fol. 26r, 29v], the first of which is XV¹, suggesting ms. was in Italy before purchase by Borromeo, and making it unlikely that it had been collected in France by an Italian humanist collector.

¹¹¹ MO (XII¹; “Italie”).

¹¹² MO (XII; “Italie”); R. Sabbadini, *I tre libri De officiis*, Turin 1889, p. xx, n. 2 (XII). Copious interlinear and marginal glosses throughout, almost entirely by one Italian XIIIc. hand, with beginnings of elaborate *cancellaresca* elongations.

Shelf mark	Text(s)	Date	Origin	School use
H 178 inf. ¹¹³	Vergil <i>Opera</i>	XII mid/2	Italy	XII–XVI
O 126 sup. ¹¹⁴	Horace <i>O</i>	XII ¹	Italy	XII
R 22 sup. ¹¹⁵	Ovid <i>M, T</i>	XII/XIII	Italy, possibly Northern	XIII–XV ¹
R 54 sup. ¹¹⁶	Juvenal	XII ¹	Italy	XII–XV
S 53 sup. ¹¹⁷	Juvenal	XII ¹	Italy	XII
T 56 sup. ¹¹⁸	Cicero <i>B, DT</i> ps. Sallust <i>I</i>	XII ¹	Italy	XIV
Trotti 351 ¹¹⁹	Lucan	XII ¹	Italy	XII–XV ¹
Milan, Biblioteca Trivulziana				
769 ¹²⁰	Cicero <i>O</i>	XII mid	N. Italy	XV
Montecassino, Archivio dell'Abbazia				
476 ¹²¹	Lucan	XII ¹	Italy	XII
477 ¹²²	Lucan	XII ²	Italy	XII ² –XIV
485 ¹²³	Statius <i>T</i>	XII ²	Italy	unglossed
500 ¹²⁴	Lucan	XII ²	Italy	XII ² –XIII mid
Monza, Biblioteca Capitolare				
d–1/103 ¹²⁵	Lucan	XI/XII	Italy	unglossed

¹¹³ MO (XII²; “France?”). XIIIc. (fol. 30r, 34v, 57v, 96r) and XIVc. (fol. 30v, 35r) Italian glosses.

¹¹⁴ MO (XII; “Italie”). XIII² Italian glosses.

¹¹⁵ MO (XII ex.). Succession of XIII, XIV and early XVc. Italian glossators.

¹¹⁶ MO (XI²; “Italie”). XIIc. origin: diphthongs always with cedilla; no ct ligature; ampersand alternating with 2-shaped “et.” XIIIc., XIVc. and XV¹ Italian glossators. Given Italian localization, MO’s “Italie ou Allemagne?” (II.596) for the *accessus* is problematic.

¹¹⁷ MO (XII). Three XIIIc. notes on fol. 43v in Italian hands.

¹¹⁸ MO (XII). Restorations by XIII ex. Italian hand (fol. 1r–11v, 16r–v, fol. 10–11, 17r). XIVc. *cancelleresca* annotator.

¹¹⁹ MO (XII²; “France”). Numerous XIII, XIV and XV¹ interlinear and marginal Italian glossators.

¹²⁰ MO (XII¹). XIIIc. Italian marginal glosses (fol. 3v, 34v).

¹²¹ MO (XII¹).

¹²² MO (XII²). Italian XIVc. marginalia in a cursive hand, pp. 1–2, 7–10, etc.

¹²³ MO (XII; “Allemagne”).

¹²⁴ MO (XII ex.). XIIIc. Italian glosses.

¹²⁵ MO (XI); A. Belloni and M. Ferrari, *La Biblioteca Capitolare di Monza* (Padua, 1974), pp. 64–65 (“s. XI”). Although ms. preserves the typical slanted script of XIc. Caroline minuscule, nevertheless it has many features typical of XIIc: use of round final s, 2-shaped “et” always used, no ampersands, diphthongs indicated with cedilla or not at all. qui = q. Although unglossed, should be considered a schoolbook because of the text, because of its low quality and subsequent abuse by notaries and because its format would allow some limited interlinear and marginal glossing.

Shelf mark	Text(s)	Date	Origin	School use
Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale				
V.A.11 ¹²⁶	Cicero <i>SS</i>	XII ²	Italy	XII ² , XIII ²
IV.F.26 ¹²⁷	Horace <i>Opera</i>	XII ¹	Italy	XII–XIV
IV.F.31 ¹²⁸	Horace <i>A, E</i>	XII/XIII	Italy	XII/XIII–XIII
IV.F.45 ¹²⁹	Juvenal	XI/XII	Italy	XI/XII–XIII
IV.E.34 ¹³⁰	Lucan	XII ²	Italy	XII ²
IV.F.2 ¹³¹	Ovid <i>M</i>	XII ²	Italy	XII ² –XIV
IV.E.44 ¹³²	Statius <i>T</i>	XII ²	Italy	XV
IV.E.19 ¹³³	Vergil <i>A</i>	XII ²	Italy	XII ² –XIV
Oxford, Bodleian Library				
Wood B. 3 ¹³⁴	Juvenal	XII ¹ /mid	Italy, possibly Northern	XII ²
Canon. class. Lat. 37 ¹³⁵	Juvenal	XII ²	Italy	XII ² , XV ²
Auct. F.2.9 ¹³⁶	Lucan	XII ¹ /mid	Italy	XII–XV
Padua, Biblioteca Antoniana				
Ms. 4 Scaff. I ¹³⁷	Sallust <i>BJ</i>	XII ex.	Italy, possibly Padua	XIII

¹²⁶ MO (XII²; “Italie”). Italian XIII² glossing at end of Macrobius commentary. Owned and dated 10 Sept. 1453 (fol. IIIv) by Guinforte Barzizza, with signed gloss (fol. 12r).

¹²⁷ MO: (XI/XII; “Italie”) XIIIc. Italian glosses.

¹²⁸ MO: (XII/XIII; “Italie”) XIIIc. Italian glosses.

¹²⁹ MO (XI). Consistent use of cedilla suggests slightly later dating, suggested by glossators appearing no earlier than mid-XIIc. XIIIc. Italian annotation.

¹³⁰ MO (XII²; “Italie”).

¹³¹ MO (XII ex.; “Italie”). ct ligature used by both scribe and early glossators suggests earlier dating. XIIIc. Italian glossing.

¹³² MO (XII ex.; “Allemagne?”). XIIIc. Italian annotations (fol. 4v and 45v).

¹³³ MO (XII ex.; “France”). ct ligature evident in one copyist suggests slightly earlier dating. Consistent Italian glossing from time of copying until XIV².

¹³⁴ MO (XI; “Italie”); F. Madan, H. H. E. Craster, and N. Denholm-Young, *Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library*, 2, pt. 2 (Oxford, 1937), p. 1193 (XI, Italy); N. R. Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, p. 164 (XI). Despite ct ligatures and ampersands throughout, fully perpendicular *ductus* suggests later dating, supported by earliest glossator appearing in later XIIc. XIII¹ Italian gloss (fol. 4v).

¹³⁵ MO (XII¹; “Italie”); Otto Pächt and J. J. G. Alexander, *Illuminated Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library Oxford*, 2 (Oxford, 1970), p. 4 n. 35 (XII¹). Later dating suggested by “g” tending to compression, no ct ligatures, no ampersands, 7-shaped “et” throughout and fully perpendicular script. qui = q.

¹³⁶ MO (XII¹; “Italie?”); Pächt and Alexander, p. 103 (XII¹; “Italy (?)”). Slightly later date perhaps suggested by fully perpendicular script, predominating 7-shaped “et” but some remaining ampersands, diphthongs with cedilla. XIIIc. Italian restoration (fol. 39–40), qui = q.

¹³⁷ fol. 3r–33v: MO (XII/XIII; “Italie”); G. Abbate and G. Luisetto, *Codici manoscritti della Biblioteca Antoniana*, 1 (Padua, 1975), p. 5 (XII). XIIIc. Italian glossing; qui = q. This ms., consisting of three independent elements (fol. 35r–50v: BC, XIII¹), assembled in XIV¹ by hand making restoration of initial folios of *BJ* and who rewrote fol. 35r of *BC*. Paduan

Shelf mark	Text(s)	Date	Origin	School use
Ms. 4 Scaff. I ¹³⁸	Sallust <i>BC</i>	XII ²	Italy, possibly Padua	unglossed
Pavia, Archivio di Stato: Archivio Notarile Frammenti (uncatalogued)				
322				
(1/R 1/Valletta) Cart. 23 ¹³⁹ 407	Juvenal	XI ²	Italy, probably Pavia or nearby	XI–XII
(1/R 2/Valetta) Cart. 23 ¹⁴⁰ SN CT	Vergil <i>A</i>	XI ²	Italy, probably Pavia or nearby	XII in.
23–02/B/V ¹⁴¹	Juvenal	XII ¹ /mid	Italy, probably Pavia or nearby	XII–XIII
Pavia, Biblioteca Universitaria				
Aldini 384 ¹⁴²	Cicero <i>A</i> (<i>accessus</i> only)	XII ²	N. Italy	XII ²
Perugia, Biblioteca Comunale Augusta				
F 45 ¹⁴³	Sallust <i>BC, BJ</i>	XI ex.	Italy	XII
G 74 (485) ¹⁴⁴	Lucan	XII/XIII	Italy	XII/XIII, XIV–XV

ownership note (fol. 34r), transcribed by Abbate and Luisetto, p. 5, dating from XIVc., suggests possible Paduan origin for whole ms.

¹³⁸ fol. 34r–v: MO (XII ex.; “Italie”); Abbate and Luisetto, *ibid.* (XI/XII).

¹³⁹ Ugo Fiorina, “Frammenti di codici membranacei delle *Saturae* di Giovenale dei secoli XI e XIII rinvenuti nell’Archivio di Stato di Pavia,” *Athenaeum* 59 (1981), 460–61 (XI¹: “[scrittura] carolina probabilmente di area pavese” (Fiorina, p. 461); MO (XI, “Italie”). Slightly later dating perhaps suggested by mixture of ampersands and 7-shaped “et” and by diphthongs indicated with cedilla. Densely glossed by at least three hands, of which one seems a little later than copyist (Xlex.), using ampersands mixed with 7-shaped “et” but much more abbreviated than the copyist, and using Italian abbreviation for qui (q). Main glossator seems XII mid (using only 7-shaped “et” and highly abbreviated) and using Italian abbreviation for qui (q). Final glossator, writing larger, seems to be XII/XIII, still using a “g” with open bottom loop.

¹⁴⁰ Ugo Fiorina and Carmine Ziccardi, “Frammenti di codici antichissimi invenuti nell’Archivio di Stato di Pavia,” in *Il libro. Mille anni di storia documentati dalle testimonianze conservate a Pavia. Catalogo della Mostra* (Pavia, 1982), p. 38 (XI: [scrittura] “carolina probabilmente di area pavese”). XI² dating: ampersand predominates over 7-shaped “et” but cedilla used for diphthongs, ct ligature. One marginal gloss and one interlinear. Marginal seems later than copyist, given constant use of round final “s’s.” Marginal gloss corrected by a hand contemporaneous to it. Both seem datable to XII in.

¹⁴¹ Fiorina, “Frammenti di codici membranacei,” p. 463 (XII¹, “[scrittura] carolina probabilmente di area pavese” (Fiorina, p. 463)); MO (XII, “Italie”). XII¹ or possibly mid: only one possible ampersand, 7-shaped “et” strongly predominates, no ct ligatures, diphthongs with cedilla, script nearly vertical, bottom loop of “g” still distinct and not squashed.

¹⁴² MO (XII).

¹⁴³ MO (XII¹, “Italie”). qui = q.

¹⁴⁴ MO (XII/XIII, “Italie”). qui = q.

Shelf mark	Text(s)	Date	Origin	School use
Poppi, Biblioteca Comunale "Rilliana"				
23 ¹⁴⁵	Horace <i>A, E, S</i>	XII ¹	Italy	
Ravenna, Biblioteca Classense				
100 ¹⁴⁶	Lucan	XII ²	Italy	XII ² –XIV
Rome, Biblioteca dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei e Corsiniana				
Rossi 101 ¹⁴⁷	Juvenal	XI ²	Italy	XI ² , XII–XIII, XV
Rossi 121 ¹⁴⁸	Vergil <i>A</i>	XI ²	Italy	XI ² , XII–XIII, XV
Rossi 314 ¹⁴⁹	Terence <i>E</i>	XII ex.	N. Italy	XII ex., XV
Rome, Biblioteca Angelica				
1060 ¹⁵⁰	Ovid <i>H</i>	XII ²	Italy	XII ² –XIV
1352 ¹⁵¹	Lucan	XII ²	Italy	XII ² , XIV
1376 ¹⁵²	Terence <i>E</i>	XII ¹	Italy	XII
Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense				
537 ¹⁵³	Horace <i>A, E</i>	XII ex.	Italy	XII ex., XIII

¹⁴⁵ Mazzatinti, VI, p. 131 (XII–XIII); *I manoscritti della Biblioteca Comunale di Poppi (Secoli XII–XVI). Un esperimento di catalogazione diretto da Emanuele Casamassima*, eds. Guglielmo Bartoletti and Ilari Pescini (Milan, 1993) (*Inventari e cataloghi toscani*, 42), p. 15 (XII); MO (XII², "Italie").

¹⁴⁶ Mazzatinti, IV, p. 165 (s. XIII); P. Tremoli, *De Lucani codice Ravennati 100* (Trieste, 1955) (s. XII ex., "Gallia Cisalpina"); MO (XII/XIII, "France"). Contemporaneous glossator (fol. 63v–77r) uses qui = q, although the copyist uses q; XIII and XIVc. Italian vernacular glossators; XIIIc. Italian notarial style marginal and interlinear glosses.

¹⁴⁷ MO (XI², "Italie?"); Petrucci, "Censimento," I, p. 1153 (XI²); A. Petrucci, *Catalogo sommario dei manoscritti del Fondo Rossi* (Rome, 1977), pp. 47–8 (XI). Core (fol. 13r–28r: XI² [ct ligatures, consistent ampersands, no 7-shaped "et," diphthongs with cedilla]) was restored first in XI/XII (fol. 1r–12v, 30r–31v: few ampersands, few ct ligatures, 7-shaped "et" omnipresent, diphthongs with cedilla), then again in XV² (29r–v, and 32r–44v) by several different hands (repairs also made to fol. 1r–9v). qui = q [in all antique parts].

¹⁴⁸ MO (XI², "Italie"); Petrucci, *Catalogo sommario*, p. 56 (XI²); Petrucci, "Censimento," I, pp. 1153–4 (XI²). qui = q. Principal glossator: late XIIIc. Italian hand (crossed t but always uses long final s; qui = q).

¹⁴⁹ MO (XII ex., "Nord de l'Italie?"); Petrucci, *Catalogo sommario*, pp. 152–3 (XII ex.); Petrucci, "Censimento," I, p. 1155 (XII ex.: "Secondo il parere (comunicato verbalmente) di dom Eugène Cardine, il codice sarebbe originario della Germania o dell'Italia settentrionale.") qui = q.

¹⁵⁰ MO (XII², "Italie"); E. Narducci, *Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum praeter graecos et orientales in Biblioteca Angelica* (Rome, 1893), p. 434 (XIII). qui = q, pigskin, XIIIc. Italian glossators.

¹⁵¹ MO (XII ex., "Italie"); Narducci, p. 569 (XIII). qui = q, pigskin, XIIIc. Italian glossators.

¹⁵² MO (XII¹, "Italie"); Narducci, p. 581 (XI). qui = q.

¹⁵³ Fol. 24–54: MO (XII/XIII). XIIIc. Italian glossators, qui = q.

Shelf mark	Text(s)	Date	Origin	School use
Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale “Vittorio Emanuele II”				
Vitt. Eman. 1410 ¹⁵⁴	Lucan	XII ²	Italy (?)	XIII–XV
Rome, Biblioteca Vallicelliana				
B.61 ¹⁵⁵	Lucan	XII ²	Italy	XII ex.–XIII, XIV, XV ²
C.97 ¹⁵⁶	Status <i>T</i>	XII ex.	N. Italy (?)	XII ex.
F. 25 ¹⁵⁷	Ovid <i>M</i>	XII ex.	Italy	XII–XV ¹
Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria				
D.V.38 ¹⁵⁸	Cicero <i>SS</i>	XII ²	N. Italy	XII ² –XIII
D.VI.34 ¹⁵⁹	Lucan	XII ¹	Italy	XII–XIII
I.VI.2 ¹⁶⁰	Horace <i>Opera</i>	XII ²	N. Italy	Dense glosses
K ² .II.1 ¹⁶¹	Lucan	XII/XIII	N. Italy	XII/XIII–XIII

¹⁵⁴ MO (XII/XIII, “France”). Although the principal XIIIc. glossator is French (et = Z), he does sometimes use Italian q = qui. Moreover, another XIIIc. glossator, possibly a little later than this one (as suggested by one gloss in which this schoolboy reader seems to adjust his writing space to pre-existing gloss by French glossator), seems Italian (e.g. fol. 1r “rostra”) and evidently an adolescent school reader, judging from unformed and stiff handwriting. Hand of the copyist uses 7-shaped “et” which usually looks Italian, not French. Possible hypothesis: ms., possibly conventual product, was read by a non-Italian reader in XIIIc. Italy, who picked up some Italian scribal habits (e.g. abbreviation for qui). In Italy by XIVc.: regular XIV and XVc. Italian glosses, including the vernacular (fol. 3r: “cum mortalità”).

¹⁵⁵ MO (XII ex., “Italie”); Petrucci, “Censimento,” II, p. 1032 (XII/XIII). q = qui.

¹⁵⁶ MO (XII ex.; “Allemagne?”); Petrucci, “Censimento,” II (1970), p. 1051 (XII ex.). Pigskin; many contemporaneous glossators use q = qui although scribe uses qⁱ = qui; some glossators look Italianate, although scribes do not always used distinctively Italian 7-shaped “et”; some later scribes look more distinctively Italian.

¹⁵⁷ MO (XII ex., “Italie”); Petrucci, “Censimento,” II, pp. 1068–69 (XII ex.). q = qui, some XIIIc. glossing looks distinctively Italian: e.g. fol. 119r–v.

¹⁵⁸ MO (“France?”). 1. fol. 1r–34v: Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, inc. In dandis accipiendis que muneribus, ita recte officia... (not previously identified in catalogues by Pasini [1749], Cipolla and Frati [1904], Mazzatinti or MO).

2. Fol. 35r–48r: Boethius, *Arithmetica*

3. Fol. 49v: [brief astrological text] Inc. Hic inveni in fine sive post finem cuiusdam Macrobi... .

4. Fol. 49v–50v: Commented astrological diagrams.

5. Fol. 51r–53r: Cicero, *Somnium Scipionis*.

6. Fol. 53r–93r: Macrobius, *Commentari in Somnium Scipionis*.

Date: 1. XII². 2. XII², different hand. 3. XIII², semi-cursive script, with cancelleresca elements.

4. XII², different hand. 5. XII², different hand. 6. XII², same hand as 5.

Origin: 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 are N. Italian, not “France?” (MO). Hand of 3 wrote beginning of gloss on fol. 75v, showing that ms. was in Italy by XIII². Rest of this gloss written by same XIII² hand providing only gloss to 3. 1 looks N. Italian too, although no positive evidence to link it with rest of manuscript.

¹⁵⁹ MO (XII¹, “Italie”).

¹⁶⁰ MO (XI/XII).

¹⁶¹ MO (XII).

Shelf mark	Text(s)	Date	Origin	School use
Turin, Biblioteca Reale				
Varia 55 ¹⁶²	Cicero SS	XII ¹	Italy	XV
Udine, Archivio di Stato				
Frammento 220 ¹⁶³	Sallust <i>BC</i>	XII ex.	Italy	XII ex.
Frammento 226 ¹⁶⁴	Lucan	XII ¹ /mid	Italy, possibly Northern	XII
Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana				
Barb. lat. 44 ¹⁶⁵	Juvenal	XII	Italy	XII–XIII, XV
Barb. lat. 105 ¹⁶⁶	Juvenal	XII in.	Italy	XII ex.
Chigi H.IV.130 ¹⁶⁷	Horace <i>E</i>	XII/XIII	Italy	XII/XIII–XIV
Chigi H.V.152 ¹⁶⁸	Sallust <i>BC, BJ</i>	XII/XIII	Italy	XII/XIII–XIII
Ott. lat. 1412 ¹⁶⁹	Vergil <i>Opera</i>	XII ²	Italy	XII ² –XV ²
Ott. lat. 1469 ¹⁷⁰	Ovid <i>T</i>	XI/XII	Italy	XI/XII, XII
Ott. lat. 1648 ¹⁷¹	Sallust <i>BC, BJ</i>	XII/XIII	Italy	XII/XIII, XV
Ott. lat. 2007 ¹⁷²	Lucan	XII ²	Italy	XII ² –XIV

¹⁶² MO (XII; “Italie”)

¹⁶³ C. Scalon, *Libri, scuole e cultura nel Friuli medioevale* (Padua, 1987), pp. 255–56 and plate LXXXI (XI ex., “Francese”); MO, (XII/XIII, “Italie”). qui = q, fully rounded script, 7-shaped “et” in fully Italian manner.

¹⁶⁴ Scalon, *Libri, scuole*, p. 260 and plate LXXXV (XII¹, “Francese”); MO, III.2, p. 95 (XII m., “France”). qui = q¹ and qui = q.

¹⁶⁵ MO (XII ex., “Italie”); S. Prete, *Bybliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae codices manuscripti recensiti* (Vatican City, 1968), p. 75 (XII); C. Jeudy, “Notes sur quelques mss. de textes classiques latins,” *Revue d’histoire des textes* 1 (1971), 213–14 (XII ex.); *Manuscripts latins*, I, pp. 99–100 (XII). qui = q.

¹⁶⁶ MO (XII, “Italie”); Prete, p. 182 (XI ex.); *Manuscripts latins*, I, pp. 147–8 (XII). Slight tendency to lean to right, but perhaps not pronounced enough to justify XI ex.; no ct ligatures, but ampersands alternate with 7-shaped “et”, g has fully separated lower loop, diphthongs indicated with cedilla. qui = q.

¹⁶⁷ *Manuscripts latins*, I, pp. 295–6 (XII/XIII, “italienne”). qui = q, pigskin, XIIIc. Italian annotations and glosses.

¹⁶⁸ *Manuscripts latins*, I, p. 311 (XII/XIII, “italienne”). No ampersands, ct ligatures, diphthongs, “g” tending to compression, but the hand writing the *accessus* (fol. 1r) looks distinctly XII², with one clear “g” with separate bottom loop. qui = q, pigskin, XIIIc. Italian glossators.

¹⁶⁹ MO (XII², “Italie”); *Manuscripts latins*, I, 552–55 (XII, “italienne”). qui = q, pigskin.

¹⁷⁰ MO (XI ex.; “Italie”); C. Questa, “Ovidio nell’Ottoboniano lat. 1469,” *Scriptorium* 13 (1959), pp. 217–232 (XI/XII); *Manuscripts latins*, I, pp. 579–80 (XI/XII, “probablement italienne”). qui = q.

¹⁷¹ MO (XII ex.; “Nord de l’Italie?”); *Manuscripts latins*, I, pp. 636–7 (XII ex., “France méridionale ou Italie du Nord?”). qui = q.

¹⁷² *Manuscripts latins*, I, pp. 741–2 (XII/XIII, “italienne”). qui = q, pigskin, XIIIc. Italian glosses.

Shelf mark	Text(s)	Date	Origin	School use
Pal. lat. 862 ¹⁷³	Sallust <i>BC, BJ</i>	XII ²	Italy, possibly Northern	XII–XIII, XV
Pal. lat. 888 ¹⁷⁴	Sallust <i>BC, BJ</i>	XII ²	Italy	XIII/XIV
Pal. lat. 1531 ¹⁷⁵	Cicero <i>O</i>	XII/XIII	Italy	XII/XIII, XIII, XV
Reg. lat. 1554 ¹⁷⁶	Lucan	XII ¹	Italy	XII–XIII
Reg. lat. 2080 ¹⁷⁷	Lucan	XII ²	Italy	XII ² , XIV ²
Reg. lat. 2080 ¹⁷⁸	Vergil <i>E, G</i>	XII/XIII	Italy	XII/XIII, XV
Rossi 503 ¹⁷⁹	Vergil <i>G, A</i>	XII ¹	Italy	XII, XIV–XV
Rossi 508 ¹⁸⁰	Sallust <i>BC, BJ</i>	XII mid	Italy	XII
Vat. lat. 1575 ¹⁸¹	Vergil <i>Opera</i>	XII ¹	Italy, possibly Northern	XII–XIII, XV
Vat. lat. 1577 ¹⁸²	Vergil <i>Opera</i>	XII ²	Italy	XIV–XV
Vat. lat. 1587 ¹⁸³	Horace <i>Opera</i>	XII ²	Italy	XII ² –XIII, XV mid
Vat. lat. 1593 ¹⁸⁴	Ovid <i>M</i>	XII ²	Italy, possibly Tuscany	XII ² –XV ²

¹⁷³ MO (XII², “Italie: peut-être Nonantola”); *Manuscripts latins*, II.2, p. 49–50 (XII). qui = q, XIIIc. Italian glossator/restorer.

¹⁷⁴ MO (XII ex.; “Italie ou Midi de la France”); *Manuscripts latins*, II.2., p. 65–7 (XII; “allemande”). qui = q, pigskin, XIII/XIV Italian glossator.

¹⁷⁵ MO (XII ex.; “Italie”); *Manuscripts latins*, II.2, pp. 182–3 (XII, “italienne”). qui = q, XIIIc. Italian glosses.

¹⁷⁶ MO (XII ex.; “Italie?”); R. Badali, “I codici romani di Lucano,” *Bollettino del Comitato per la preparazione dell’edizione nazionale dei classici greci e latini*, n.s. 23 (1975), 19–21 (XII/XIII); *Manuscripts latins*, II.1, pp. 266–7 (XII fin). ct ligatures, 7-shaped “et” alternating with ampersands, diphthongs with cedilla, script leaning to right but a pronounced tendency to verticality, g with fully separated lower loop. qui = q.

¹⁷⁷ MO (XII²; “Italie?”); Badali (1975), p. 27–29 (XII); *Manuscripts latins*, II.1, pp 505–10 (“XII fin,” “francaise ou italienne”). qui = q.

¹⁷⁸ MO (XII ex.?, “Italie”); *Manuscripts latins*, II.1., pp 505–10 (XII, “italienne”). qui = q.

¹⁷⁹ MO (XII¹, “Italie”); *Manuscripts latins*, II.2., pp. 450–2 (XII, “italienne”). qui = q.

¹⁸⁰ MO (XII m.; “Italie”); *Manuscripts latins*, II.2., p. 65–7 (XII, “italienne”). qui = q.

¹⁸¹ MO (XII¹; “France ou Italie”); *Manuscripts latins*, III.1, pp. 138–141 (XII; “italienne ou allemande?”). XII² glossator (fol. 10r) uses qui = q, as does XII² restorer of fol. 52r.

¹⁸² *Manuscripts latins*, III.1, pp. 146–51 (XII, italienne). qui = q. Not glossed until XIV and XV c. (use then very heavy), but layout (adequate but limited space between lines and in margins for glosses) and mediocre quality of scribes and parchment suggest intended school use.

¹⁸³ MO (XII²; “Italie”); *Codices vaticani latini*, III, ed. Bartolomeo Nogara (Vatican City, 1912), pp. 83–84 (XII); *Manuscripts latins*, III.1, pp. 166–7 (XII, “italienne”). qui = q, Italian XIIIc. glossing.

¹⁸⁴ Fol. 1–118: MO (XII/XIII, “Italie”); *Codices vaticani latini*, III, ed. B. Nogara, pp. 87–8 (XII ex.); F. Munari, *Catalogue of the MSS of Ovid’s Metamorphoses* (London, 1957), p. 65 (XII); *Manuscripts latins*, III.1, pp. 175–78 (XII (fin); “paraît italienne”). qui = q; XIIIc. Italian glosses, annotations and additions. Annotation (fol. Ir: Guidattus Lucchesis de Pentolina comitatus senensis quondam in XXV libr. pro furto in folio <...> in libro cleri<coru?>m.) suggests Tuscan origin or provenance.

Shelf mark	Text(s)	Date	Origin	School use
Vat. lat. 1606 ¹⁸⁵	Ovid <i>T</i>	XII ²	Italy	XII ² , XV
Vat. lat. 1623 ¹⁸⁶	Lucan	XII in.	Italy (?)	XII
Vat. lat. 1661 ¹⁸⁷	Claudian <i>R</i>	XII ²	Italy	XII ²
Vat. lat. 1833 ¹⁸⁸	Sallust <i>BC, BJ</i>	XII ²	Italy	XII ² –XIV
Vat. lat. 2772 ¹⁸⁹	Horace <i>A, E</i>	XII/XIII	Italy	XII/XIII–XIII
Vat. lat. 2776 ¹⁹⁰	Horace <i>E, S</i>	XII ²	Italy, possibly Cremona or Piacenza	XII ² –XIII, XV ²
Vat. lat. 2796 ¹⁹¹	Lucan	XII ¹	Italy (?)	XII–XIII
Vat. lat. 2799 ¹⁹²	Lucan	XII ²	Italy, possibly Northern	XII ² –XV ²
Vat. lat. 2803 ¹⁹³	Lucan	XI/XII, XII ²	Italy	XII, XIII
Vat. lat. 3192 ¹⁹⁴	Juvenal	XI ² –XII mid.	Italy	XII, XV
Vat. lat. 3254 ¹⁹⁵	Ovid <i>H</i>	XII ²	Italy	XII, XV
Vat. lat. 3260 ¹⁹⁶	Horace <i>Opera</i>	XII in.	Italy	XII, XV

¹⁸⁵ MO (XII ex.; “Italie”); *Codices vaticani latini*, III, ed. Nogara, pp. 94–95 (XII); *Manuscripts latins*, III.1, pp. 199–200 (XII, “italienne”). qui = q.

¹⁸⁶ MO (XII; “Italie?”); Badali (1975), p. 37–38 (XII); *Manuscripts latins*, III.1 (XII, “peut-être italienne”). qui = q, pigskin, XIIIc. Italian glosses. Some contemporaneous marginal glossing, but heavy marginal and interlinear glossing due to XIIIc. hand(s) consistently using qui = q, although occasionally qui = qⁱ; these marginal glosses look more French than Italian. Fol. 87r: “probatum penne probatum penne probatum penne probatum penne” written by a French-looking hand (XIIIc.). Signature (fol. 110v: *Iste liber est Magistre Ade de Sancto Sulpitio*), XIIIc., looks French (*Manuscripts latins*: “peut-être française”). Italian ms. then traveled north of the Alps in XIIIc.?

¹⁸⁷ *Manuscripts latins*, III.1, pp. 292–93 (XII/XIII, “italienne”). qui = q, pigskin.

¹⁸⁸ MO (XII¹; “Italie”); *Manuscripts latins*, III.1, pp. 411–12 (XII, “italienne”). qui = q, pigskin, XIIIc. Italian annotations, one dated 1225 in Rome (*Manuscripts latins*, III.1, p. 412).

¹⁸⁹ MO (XII/XIII; “Italie”); *Manuscripts latins*, III.1, pp. 596–7 (XIII, “italienne”). qui = qⁱ and qui = q alternate.

¹⁹⁰ MO (XII²: Cremona); *Manuscripts latins*, III.1, pp. 596–7 (XII, “italienne,” Piacenza/Cremona). qui = q. *Ars dictaminis* fragment, containing reference to the church of Piacenza and Cremona (fol. 56r–v), wrongly dated by MO to XIVc. but correctly dated to XIIIc. by *Manuscripts latins*.

¹⁹¹ MO (XII¹; “Italie”); Badali (1975), p. 38 (XII/XIII); *Manuscripts latins*, III.1, p. 620 (XII fin?, “italienne”). qui = q, qui = qⁱ. Most of the later glossators look French, although no definite indication. Ms. could be N. Italian or could have traveled to France in XIIIc.

¹⁹² MO (XII/XIII, “France”); *Manuscripts latins*, III.1, p. 623 (italienne, XII/XIII); Badali (1975), p. 41 (XIII). ct ligatures throughout, bottom loop of “g” sometimes separate and not compressed, no ampersands, 7-shaped “et” throughout. qui = qⁱ, but XIIIc. Italian glossators sometimes using qui = q, pigskin, script rounded but with Northern flourishes.

¹⁹³ MO (XII in.; “Italie”); Badali (1975), p. 44–6 (XI/XII); *Manuscripts latins*, III.1, pp. 626–7 (XI/XII, “italienne”). qui = q, XIIIc. Italian glossators.

¹⁹⁴ MO (XII m, “Italie”). fol. 19r–34r, 43r–53r: XI² core. fol. 3r–18v, 35r–42v: XII mid restoration. qui = q throughout.

¹⁹⁵ fol. 46r–86v: MO (XI/XII; “Italie”). “g” with separated lower loop, some ct ligatures, diphthongs with cedilla and occasionally fully written out, ampersands alternate with 7-shaped “et.” qui = q.

¹⁹⁶ MO (XII; “Italie”). qui = q.

Shelf mark	Text(s)	Date	Origin	School use
Vat. lat. 3287 ¹⁹⁷	Juvenal	XII ¹	Italy	XII–XIV
Vat. lat. 3288 ¹⁹⁸	Juvenal	XI/XII	Italy	XI/XII, XII, XIV–XV
Vat. lat. 5183 ¹⁹⁹	Horace <i>Opera</i> , Persius	XII ²	Italy, possibly Venice	XII ² , XIV
Vat. lat. 5204 ²⁰⁰	Juvenal	XII ²	Italy, possibly Northern	XII
Vat. lat. 5345 ²⁰¹	Sallust BC, BJ	XII in.	Italy	XII
Vat. lat. 6272 ²⁰²	Sallust BC, BJ	XII ²	N. Italy	XII ² , XIII, XV
Vat. lat. 6323 ²⁰³	Lucan	XII mid	Italy	XII, XIII
Vat. lat. 6828 ²⁰⁴	Vergil <i>Opera</i>	XII ¹	Italy	XII, XIV, XV
Vat. lat. 14740 ²⁰⁵	Vergil A	XII in.	Italy	XII, XIII/XIV, XV

Venice Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana

Lat. Z.546 (1596)²⁰⁶ Sallust BC, BJ XII ex. N. Italy XIV, XV

¹⁹⁷ MO (XII¹, “Italie”). qui = q.

¹⁹⁸ MO (XII¹, “Italie”); E. M. Sanford, *Juvenalis in Catalogus translationum et commentariorum* 1 (Washington, 1960–), p. 183 (XII). Fully written out diphthongs alternate with cedilla, ampersands alternate with 7-shaped “et”, no ct ligatures, “g” with fully separated lower loop, script markedly slanted to right. qui = q.

¹⁹⁹ MO (XII², Italie) “Loredan,” “de Veniexia di Frari”: front and rear flyleaves, with dates 1374 and 1376. qui = q.

²⁰⁰ MO (XII², “Italie?”); Sanford, *Juvenalis*, p. 186 (XI/XII); Finch (1970), pp. 47–8 (XII in.) qui = q¹ but one XIIc. glossator (fol. 55v, 56v–57r) uses qui = q.

²⁰¹ MO (XI/XII; “Italie”). *Ductus* slanted but perhaps already slight tendency to verticality, ampersands throughout, no 7-shaped “et”, diphthongs with cedilla, bottom loop of “g” fully separated, ct ligatures. qui = q, pigskin, Italian XIIIc. annotation (fol. 60r).

²⁰² MO (XII ex.; “Italie”). No ampersands, 7-shaped “et” throughout, no ct ligatures, bottom loop of “g” tending to compression but occasionally lower loop distinct, diphthongs sometimes with cedilla. qui = q, XIIIc. Italian cursive annotation (fol. 24v). Ownership: (fol. 69v) Iste liber est Iacobini de Brixia (XIIIc.). (fol. 69v) Istud est granum ecclesie Sancti Laurentii sub MCCXLV: primo VII sextus fru. a manera. Item V sextus speltt. Item II sextus orde. [...] (fol. 69v) A Domino Ranutio debeo habere X S. A San Charmino <...> A Donno Ugolino III S. (XIIIc.) (fol. 69v) Pignus unius scholaris Magistri Morici pro tribus grossis sibi concesso prima die mensis februarii. (XII/XIII) (fol. 1r) Cuius Andree Chii Salustius (XV c.). The early ownership in Brescia, as well as clerical references, possibly suggest an ecclesiastical grammar school context in N. Italy.

²⁰³ MO (XII²; “Italie”); Badali (1975), p. 19–21 (XII/XIII). qui = q, most prominent glossator: XIII² Italian hand with *cancelleresca* features.

²⁰⁴ MO (XII¹; “France (ou Italie?)”). qui = q.

²⁰⁵ fol. 22r–v: A. M. Piazzoni and P. Vian, *Manoscritti Vaticani latini 14666–15203. Catalogo sommario* (Vatican City, 1989), p. 38 (IX), “g” compressed with some tendency to verticality, ct ligatures, diphthongs always fully written out, ampersands throughout.

²⁰⁶ J. Valentinelli, *Biblioteca manuscritta ad S. Marci Venetiarum* VI (Venice, 1868–1873), p. 9 (XIII). Diphthongs with cedilla; 7-shaped et throughout; no ct ligature; long final s alternates with 5-shaped s; above top ruled line; compressed “g.” qui = q; Italian-style 7-shaped “et.” Consonant duplications: fol. 17v: suma; 18v: nerronis; 24r: itinneribus; 25v: apellat; 31v:

Shelf mark	Text(s)	Date	Origin	School use
Lat. VI.206 (3087) ²⁰⁷	Cicero <i>A</i>	XII mid.	Italy, probably Northern	XII–XV
Lat. VI.239 (2758) ²⁰⁸	Cicero <i>SS</i>	XII ex.	N. Italy	unglossed
Lat. X.103 (3364) ²⁰⁹	Sallust <i>BC, BJ</i>	XII mid.	Italy, possibly Northern	XII–XV
Lat. XII.148 (4512) ²¹⁰	Vergil <i>A</i>	XII ex.	N. Italy	XII ex.–XV
Lat. XII.10 (3973) ²¹¹	Claudian <i>R</i> , Statius <i>A</i>	XII ex.	N. Italy	XII ex.
Lat. XIV.232 (4257), n. 31 ²¹²	ps. Cicero <i>I</i>	XII ex.	Italy	unglossed
Lat. XIV.232 (4257) ²¹³	Ovid <i>M</i>	XII ex.	Italy	XII–XIII
Verona Biblioteca Capitolare CLXXI ^A 214	Vergil <i>A</i>	XII mid	Italy	XII/XIII or XIII

scelleratissimus; 33r: scelleribus; 34r: accerrime, acuratissime; 34v: ocupavere, oceanum; 35v: scelleris; 40v: scelleratis; 42r: scellere; 42v: scellera; 43v: suplicantes, oculitoria; 45r: accerrime, dillacerata; 52v: accerrime

²⁰⁷ Valentinelli, IV, p. 83 (XIII). Ampersands and 7-shaped “et”; diphthongs with cedilla; angled/vertical script; some ct ligatures; bottom loop of “g” separated. qui = q; many XIIIc. Italian glossators. Consonant duplications: fol. 1v: Affricani; 2v: diffiniunt; 4r: diffinicionem; 5v: oportunitates, oportune; 7v: affricanus; 17r: cassum [*pro casum*]; 18v: Affrico.

²⁰⁸ MO (XIIex.: “France”); P. Zorzanello, *Catalogo dei codici latini della Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana di Venezia non compresi nel catalogo di G. Valentinelli*, Trezzano sul naviglio, I (Milan, 1980–1985) p. 263 (XII). Script rounded and not angular; lower stroke of 7-shaped “et” tends to right in Italian manner; qui = q; early fourteenth-century Italian glosses to Macrobius.

²⁰⁹ MO (XI/XII, “Italie”); Valentinelli, VI, pp. 8–9 (XII). Ampersands predominate over 7-shaped “et”; no ct ligatures; diphthongs with cedilla; lower loop of “g” separated; script fully vertical. One XIIc. glossator looks distinctly N. Italian with qui = q and 7-shaped “et” with diagonal stroke bending to right; copyist uses qui = q; XIIIc. Italian glossators.

²¹⁰ MO (XII²); Zorzanello, II, p. 276 (XIII?). N. Italy (same 7-shaped “et” as in Marc. Lat. VI.239 with lower stroke of 7-shaped “et” tending to right; XIIIc. Italian glossing; qui = q).

²¹¹ Zorzanello, II, pp. 92–93 (XIII). “g” compressed but ampersands throughout, as well as 7-shaped “et”; no diphthongs or ct ligatures. Consonant duplications: fol. 2r: luccus, 3v: recesus, 5r: Tracessensem, 7v: Narcisus, 9r: torsisset, 18v: Oceanum, 24r: ruppibus, 25r: immittabilia, 31r: comittitur. Italianate 7-shaped “et”; qui = q.

²¹² Zorzanello, III, p. 368 (XIV?). 7-shaped “et” throughout, thin nib typical of Caroline pens, “g” compressed, elongated book format typical of Caroline mss. qui = q; 7-shaped “et” in Italian manner.

²¹³ Zorzanello, III, p. 380 (XIII). Uses ampersand consistently at beginning of verses; written below top ruled line; some 7-shaped “et”; no diphthongs or ct ligatures; “g” fully compressed, elongated book format. Italianate 7-shaped “et”; XIIIc. Italian annotations.

²¹⁴ fol. 1r–2v: A. Spagnolo, *I manoscritti della Biblioteca Capitolare di Verona*, ed. S. Marchi (Verona 1996), p. 238 (XII); MO (XII/XIII, “Italie”); Passalacqua, pp. 408–9. qui = q; 7-shaped “et” in Italianate manner.

Manuscripts seen and excluded:

- London, Lambeth Palace Library 471
Lucca, Biblioteca Statale 1417, 1433
Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana F 102 sup., I 72 inf., M 9 sup.
Montecassino, Archivio dell'Abbazia 474
Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale V.A.12, IV.F.39, IV.C.9, IV.F.3, IV.E.16
Padua, Biblioteca Antoniana Ms. 4 Scaff. I (fol. 35r–50v)
Parma, Biblioteca Palatina Parmense 2662, 2930
Pavia, Biblioteca Universitaria Aldini 227
Poppi, Biblioteca Comunale Rilliana 39
Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense 537 (fol. 56–82)
Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale “Vittorio Emanuele II” S. Pantaleo 31/14 (formerly 506)
Rome, Biblioteca Vallicelliana B. 58
Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria I.IV.16
Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana Pal. lat. 1620, 1684; Reg. lat. 1554 (fol. 1–11, 58–60); Vat. lat. 1580, 1589, 1592, 1596, 1834, 2759, 2774, 2807, 2826, 3254 (fol. 1–46, 87–91), 11471
Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana Lat. XIV.222 (4007), Lat. XII.54 (4647), Lat. XII.84 (4382), Lat. XII.66 (4207), Lat. XII.134 (4128), Lat. Z.456 (1738), Lat. Z.540 (1858), Lat. Z.541 (1560), Lat. VI.44 (2846), Lat. Z.417 (1589), Lat. VI.259
Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare CCLXIV

HUMANISM: ANCIENT LEARNING, CRITICISM, SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES

Paul F. Grendler

Humanism combined a set of scholarly skills, admiration for the ancient world, and a sharp critical attitude. Humanists first challenged medieval learning, then rejected other received knowledge, even when it came from the ancient world. The impact and influence of humanism depended greatly on institutionalization. When humanists and others trained in humanistic skills and imbued with its critical culture found positions in the major institutions of learning of the day, schools and universities, they produced major intellectual change. When they did not, humanism's impact was limited.¹

The Historiography of Humanism

The modern scholarly interpretation of Renaissance humanism began with Georg Voigt (1827–1891) and his classic work, *Die Wiederbelebung des classischen Alterthums oder das erste Jahrhundert des Humanismus* of 1859, published the year before Jacob Burckhardt's book appeared.² This was no essay, but 486 pages packed with learning and interpretation. Voigt followed with two much expanded and revised editions of 1,115 pages, with a great deal of fresh information, in two volumes in 1880–1881 and 1893. He also published a three-volume study of Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini and

¹ Because of space limitations, only limited bibliographical information, often just a critical edition of a text mentioned and a key secondary source, is given in the notes.

² The three German editions of Voigt's work are Georg Voigt, *Die Wiederbelebung des classischen Alterthums oder das erste Jahrhundert des Humanismus* (Berlin, 1859); same title, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1880–81); and same title, *Dritte Auflage*, ed. Max Lehnerdt, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1893). The last edition was republished as a photographic reprint in two volumes, same title (Berlin, 1960). There is very little scholarship on Voigt; see the pages in Wallace K. Ferguson, *The Renaissance in Historical Thought: Five Centuries of Interpretation* (Cambridge, MA, 1948), pp. 151–59; and Paul F. Grendler, "Georg Voigt: Historian of Humanism," to appear in *Humanism and Creativity in the Italian Renaissance: Essays in Honor of Ronald G. Witt*, eds. Christopher S. Celenza and Kenneth Gouwens (Leiden, 2006), pp. 291–321.

a number of articles on humanism.³ Voigt was “the historian of humanism,” as Ludwig von Pastor called him.⁴

Voigt identified the rediscovery of classical antiquity as the fundamental cultural achievement and intellectual signature of the Renaissance. To prove his points, Voigt in *Die Wiederbelebung* offered a vast storehouse of information about Italian humanism based on an extraordinary amount of reading in the primary sources. Most important, practically every major theme in Voigt became an issue of discussion for subsequent historians of humanism. Anticipating Burckhardt, Voigt saw a sharp break between medieval culture and humanism. He saw Petrarch as the first humanist. He recognized that humanism developed differently in republics, princedoms, and the papacy. He assigned to Florence and its republican traditions a unique role. He charted and described different humanist genres and discussed the most important texts in these genres, thanks to his comprehensive knowledge of the original sources. He criticized the humanists for their paganism and imitation of the classics. Finally, he described the spread of Italian humanism to Germany, Spain, England, and France. Voigt’s book, especially in the two expanded editions, became the basic text on Italian humanism well into the twentieth century. Ludwig von Pastor, John Addington Symonds, Walter Goetz, Hans Baron, Eugenio Garin, and many others made good use of the book. Voigt also began a debate in German historiography about the relationship between Italian and German humanism which continues to this day.

Since Voigt, scholars have measured and weighed Renaissance humanism and have written a great deal about individual humanists and genres. Following Voigt’s lead, they have analyzed how humanism absorbed the civic coloration of various Italian states. Scholars have often strongly differed with Voigt; they especially reject his condemnation of humanism as pagan in spirit and what he saw as the imitative quality of humanist writings. But none has denied the essential and innovative cultural role that humanism played in the Renaissance.

Until now. In 1986 Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine published a book which argues that humanist education, both Italian and northern European, was only grammatical drill and dreary imitation that failed to inculcate moral values and eloquence.⁵ They charge that a humanist education stifled

³ Georg Voigt, *Enea Silvio de’ Piccolomini als Papst Pius der Zweite und sein Zeitalter*, 3 vols. (Berlin, 1856–1863).

⁴ Ludwig von Pastor, *The History of the Popes from the Close of the Middle Ages*, ed. Frederick Ignatius Antrobus, I (London, 1891), pp. 23 and 256.

⁵ Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities: Education and*

originality. It taught future civil servants to write “a stylised set-piece in a stylish way.” Instead of producing the free, honorable, and eloquent citizen, Latin humanistic schools produced docile, obedient, upper-class servants of the state. Grafton and Jardine lament the disappearance of Scholasticism. The thrust of the book is to contrast the lofty claims for humanistic education by pedagogues such as Guarino Guarini (1374–1460) with actual classroom practices, a useful approach. Moreover, the book is partly aimed at “present-minded pieties,” i.e., claims by teachers of the benefits of a classical and humanistic education. It should also be noted that they confine their criticism to humanist Latin education and seldom address larger issues of humanism. Their criticism of Renaissance humanism is stimulating, and the chronicle of classroom practices useful. But the argument is overstated. For example, it is hard to maintain that study of the classics thwarted the originality of Lorenzo Valla, Angelo Poliziano, Desiderius Erasmus, and many others.⁶

Although they criticize humanistic education, Grafton and Jardine do not deny the importance of humanism. Robert Black does and goes much further in his dismissal of humanism. His 1998 programmatic article on humanism and the historiographical tradition on humanism strongly rejects the view that humanism marked a real difference from the Middle Ages in any way.⁷ It denies “that humanism somehow represented a new period in intellectual history,” that Renaissance thought was “more human and more secular... than medieval thought,” and that Renaissance humanists had a greater sense of history. And much else. Even humanism’s “genuine innovations, such as textual criticism or the revival of Greek, were esoteric pursuits, not even practiced and certainly not mastered by the majority of humanists.” The article asserts that all the claims of originality for humanism exist only in the minds of historians. Most of the article is consumed with strong criticism of other scholars of humanism, beginning with Jacob Burckhardt. Thus, Benedetto Croce, Giovanni Gentile, Eugenio Garin,

the Liberal Arts in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Europe (Cambridge, MA, 1986). The quotation is found on p. 17, while the introduction on pp. xi–xvi and conclusion on pp. 210–20 offer summary statements of their views. Chapter 2, pp. 29–57, on the thwarted careers of fifteenth-century Italian female humanists, recapitulates arguments previously developed by Margaret L. King.

⁶ For additional comments on the argument of Grafton and Jardine, see Paul F. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy: Literacy and Learning, 1300–1600* (Baltimore, 1989), pp. 406–09.

⁷ Robert Black, “Humanism,” in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, ed. Christopher Allmand, 7 (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 243–77, 906–15. The quotes in the rest of this paragraph are found on pp. 265, 249, 273, and 263, respectively.

Ernst Cassirer, Ervin Panofsky, Hans Baron “and the followers of ‘civic humanism,’” Charles Trinkaus, Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine (less criticized because of their attacks on humanism), Paul Grendler, Peter Burke, Gene Brucker, and Charles Nauert are all found wanting.

The only scholar of the past 140 years of whom Black approves is Paul Oskar Kristeller, because he saw continuity between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. However, Black ignores a key part of Kristeller’s interpretation, the innovative force of Renaissance humanism. They included “the emphasis on man, on his dignity and privileged place in the universe,” the tendency to express “the concrete uniqueness of one’s feelings, opinions, experiences, and surroundings,” the “fundamental classicism” of humanist writings, and the repeated attempts to “restate the philosophical doctrines of particular ancient thinkers or schools.”⁸

There is so much criticism of the views of other scholars and listing of what humanism was not, that little space is devoted to what humanism was. Black grudgingly allows that the humanists left *ars dictaminis* behind and tried to revive ancient rhetoric, but with limited success. The humanists tried to apply critical philological techniques to history, but only succeeded in the sixteenth century. He admits that fifteenth-century humanists recovered most of the ancient texts known today and did relatively good textual emendation on these works. And their most successful innovation was the revival of Greek, which led to the philological study of the New Testament. But then Black charges humanism with a narrowing of intellectual interests, such as a lack of interest in speculative philosophy characteristic of Scholasticism.⁹ Grudging acknowledgment of a little bit of intellectual achievement and innovation in humanism, immediately followed by severe qualifications, characterizes Black’s picture of humanism.

Black’s book, *Humanism and Education in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* of 2001, continues the attacks on humanism and other scholars. It restates the claims of the 1998 article and adds new names to its list of scholars of humanism who are totally wrong.¹⁰ It basically denies the innovative

⁸ Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought: The Classic, Scholastic, and Humanistic Strains* (New York, 1961), pp. 20–21.

⁹ Black, “Humanism,” pp. 256–58, 265–68, et passim.

¹⁰ Robert Black, *Humanism and Education in Medieval and Renaissance Italy: Tradition and Innovation in Latin Schools from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge, 2001). The Introduction and Chapter 1, pp. 1–33, are an extended critique of other scholars; numerous footnotes continue the criticisms in the rest of the book. The most important names added to the list of wrong-headed scholars of humanism are Giuseppe Manacorda and Remigio Sabbadini (both seen as part of a discredited Italian positivist tradition), Paul Gehl, and W. Keith Percival.

force of the classics on fifteenth-century Latin education in Italy. The book argues strongly that Latin pre-university education in Italy did not change in substance between 1200 and 1500, and dismisses the claims of humanists and modern scholars that it did. Several reviewers have found Black's arguments unconvincing, tendentious, and overstated, and his criticisms of other scholars "needlessly gratuitous."¹¹

Attacks on Renaissance humanism are part of a larger scholarly phenomenon in the English-language scholarly world of the past twenty-five years. This is the tendency to dismiss the importance of the Renaissance generally, even to deny its existence. A shorthand term for these attacks is "Renaissance bashing." Although it takes various forms, one common element is to substitute the chronologically meaningless term "early modern" for Renaissance.¹²

These are minority views. By contrast, most Italian scholars see a cultural break between Middle Ages and Renaissance and emphasize the originality of humanism and its challenge to the views and values of late medieval Scholasticism.¹³ A learned recent example is Riccardo Fubini in

¹¹ The quotation comes from the review of Christopher S. Celenza in *Quaderni d'Italianistica* 24:1 (2003), 151 (entire review 148–52). Other critical reviews include Samuel K. Cohn, Jr., in *History* 88 (2003), 118–19; and Paul F. Grendler, *Renaissance Quarterly* 55:4 (2002), 1382–85.

¹² "Renaissance bashing" is too large a topic to discuss in a short article on humanism. For more on it, see Paul F. Grendler, "The Italian Renaissance in the Past Seventy Years: Humanism, Social History, and Early Modern in Anglo-American and Italian Scholarship," in *The Italian Renaissance in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Allen J. Grieco et al. (Florence, 2002), pp. 3–23, at 15–18. Scholars determined to dismiss the Italian Renaissance almost always begin by attacking Jacob Burckhardt's *Die Cultur der Renaissance in Italien: eine Versuch* (1860). They seem to believe that if they can disprove Burckhardt, they have cut off the head of the Renaissance dragon. This belief persists despite the ocean of good scholarship that has so dramatically modified the Burckhardtian view that it is impossible to find a strict Burckhardtian historian today. Black is typical. The first words of his article on humanism target Burckhardt. See Black, "Humanism," pp. 243–44. But attacking Burckhardt in order to discredit humanism is dubious, because Burckhardt did not see humanism as the heart of the Renaissance. He wrote that "it was not the revival of antiquity alone, but its union with the genius of the Italian people that achieved the conquest of the western world" and created the Renaissance. Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, trans. S.G.C. Middlemore, ed. Irene Gordon (New York, 1960), p. 145 for the quote and pp. 145–210 for the section on the revival of antiquity. Burckhardt's discussion of humanism is not profound. If one wants to refute the scholarly tradition of humanism, one must begin with Voigt, a much more learned and formidable foe. But Black never mentions Voigt in his article or book.

¹³ Eugenio Garin is the best example. See his programmatic *L'umanesimo italiano: Filosofia e vita civile nel Rinascimento*, 3rd Italian ed. (Bari, 1964), but first published in German in 1947. The English translation is *Italian Humanism: Philosophy and Civic Life in the Renaissance*, trans. Peter Munz (Oxford, 1965). Garin has written many other books and articles on humanists and humanism.

a series of essays analyzing texts of Francesco Petrarch, Leonardo Bruni, Poggio Bracciolini, and Lorenzo Valla written between 1350 and 1450. Fubini emphasizes that humanism was a new culture, clearly different from Scholasticism, and that humanists engaged in a polemic against traditional views. Petrarch opened the path “for a new culture that could break out of the authoritative and publicly sanctioned structures of late scholasticism, that is, of a culture especially intent on the systemization... of inherited knowledge and age-old norms.”¹⁴ Bruni, Poggio, and Valla developed these themes, as they rejected Scholastic formulations in their interpretations of traditional Christian authors. In a key essay, Fubini demonstrates the step-by-step development of a positive endorsement of secular culture. Petrarch vindicated the worth of ancient pagan authors as “bearers of values equivalent to those... (of) the Christian faith.” Bruni and Poggio circumscribed an autonomous sphere of secular culture and shaped it according to Ciceronian models, while Valla separated culture and faith. Fubini concludes that “opposition to the ideal and practical order of medieval culture could not have been more complete.”¹⁵ Fubini bases his arguments on a close reading of important texts.

As Fubini’s scholarship suggests, criticisms of humanism which focus on Latin schooling offer only a very limited view of humanism, which was much more than humanistic pre-university education. Indeed, humanistic education was not even the first phase of humanism, but the consequence of the strong criticism that leading humanists leveled against medieval schooling, accompanied by the discovery or re-discovery of previously unavailable classical texts. Humanism was a broad intellectual program of change.

¹⁴ Riccardo Fubini, *Humanism and Secularization from Petrarch to Valla*, trans. Martha King (Durham, 2003), introduction pp. 1–8, at 3. For the Italian original, see Fubini, *Umanesimo e secolarizzazione da Petrarca a Valla* (Rome, 1990), “Introduzione,” pp. vii–xv, at ix. Elsewhere in the introduction of the Italian edition, Fubini several times uses “la polemica,” “la polemica anti-tradizionalista,” “gli indirizzi antagonisti dell’umanesimo,” and “la cultura diversa” (pp. ix–xi, and xii) to describe the differences between humanism and Scholasticism, and the critical stance of the former toward the latter. For additional essays on humanism and its historiographical tradition see Fubini, *L’umanesimo italiano e i suoi storici: Origini rinascimentali, critica moderna* (Milan, 2001).

¹⁵ All quotes in this paragraph come from Fubini, *Humanism and Secularization*, p. 64.

Classical Learning and Criticism

A working definition of humanism and its historical impact involves three parts: learning based on the classics, a culture of criticism, and the institutionalization of the new scholarship and critical attitude of humanism through schools and universities.¹⁶

The first component of humanism was learning based on the classics. Humanism placed greater emphasis on the classics, it had a much better knowledge of the classics than medieval men, and it emphasized certain texts, such as Cicero's letters and orations, unavailable to medieval scholars. A set of scholarly skills based on an intense admiration and study of the ancient world came next. Paul Oskar Kristeller's definition of the *studia humanitatis* is valid and useful. He wrote, "By the first half of the fifteenth century, the *studia humanitatis* came to stand for a clearly defined cycle of scholarly disciplines, namely grammar, rhetoric, history, poetry, and moral philosophy, and the study of each of these subjects was understood to include the reading and interpretation of its standard ancient writers in Latin and, to a lesser extent, in Greek."¹⁷ Kristeller stated that a humanist was a scholar, teacher, or student of the humanities. It is hard to improve on Kristeller's explanation for this part of humanism, a set of scholarly skills based on ancient learning. And he explained the origin of the term *humanista*, beginning with a document of 1490 from the University of Pisa.¹⁸ *Humanista* meant a scholar, teacher, or student of the humanities. No earlier use of *humanista* has come to light, but many additional references to *humanista*, *humanisti*, *umanista*, and *umanisti*, in Italian and Spanish, and a handful in Latin have appeared in the sixteenth century, especially in the last third of the century.¹⁹ These references document that *humanista* almost invariably meant a scholar, teacher, or student of the *studia humanitatis*.

¹⁶ An offshoot of humanism was the development of advice and maxims for living the responsible life of the good father, husband, and citizen in this world based on ancient authors and texts, often seen as part of *la vita civile* or civic humanism. But that is a topic for another essay.

¹⁷ Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought*, pp. 9–10; reprinted in Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought and Its Sources*, ed. Michael Mooney (New York, 1979), p. 22.

¹⁸ Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought*, pp. 111, 160 n. 61.

¹⁹ For some examples, see Paul F. Grendler, "The Concept of Humanist in Sixteenth-Century Italy," in *Renaissance Studies in Honor of Hans Baron*, eds. Anthony Molho and John A. Tedeschi (Florence, 1971), pp. 445–63; and Grendler, *The Universities of the Italian Renaissance* (Baltimore, 2002), pp. 231, 236 n. 145.

But humanism involved more than a set of scholarly skills. It included a culture of criticism, with culture is defined as habits of mind which are linked to issues of contemporary society.²⁰ Humanists had the mental habit or predilection to criticize the world around them. They criticized received knowledge, especially from the Middle Ages, that shaped the life of the mind and resultant values. Humanists, especially the most important and innovative ones, poured forth an avalanche of accusatory, denunciatory, and iconoclastic writing critical of medieval and contemporary learning and values.

The culture of criticism was closely allied to the view that the ancient world of Rome and Greece presented a model of perfection and a standard against which to measure their own and others' efforts in almost every field of learning: Latin literature, science, philosophy, dialectic, rhetoric, law, and even theology. Hence, humanists looked with critical eyes at a great deal of the science, philosophy, literature, rhetoric, and human behavior of their own day and decided that it did not measure up to the standards of the ancient world or their own expectations. So they wrote works of stinging criticism, denouncing what they saw as wrong or inadequate and offered alternatives. Some of their criticism was mild, or only added a little new information to received knowledge. But more often than not, the humanists challenged received wisdom and caused it to change. They articulated points of view, which others followed. Their criticism, research, and writing established new learning in the Renaissance.

There are many examples of such stinging critiques but space to list only a few of the most important and influential. In his *Elegantiae linguae latinae libri sex*, Lorenzo Valla (1406–1457) condemned medieval Latin and its culture and praised ancient Latin language and culture. He provided a superb example of how the humanists might combine devotion to classical

²⁰ The definition of culture comes from George L. Mosse, *The Culture of Western Europe: The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (New York, 1961), "Introduction: Statement and Definitions," pp. 1–9, at 3, 4, and 5. It is repeated in shortened form in the revised edition: same title (Boulder and London, 1988), pp. 1–10, at p. 2. "Culture" rather than "ideology" seems the better English term to characterize the critical attitude of humanists, because ideology evokes eighteenth-, nineteenth- and twentieth-century complete systems of belief and thought, such as the Enlightenment ideology of the *philosophes*, Romanticism, Nationalism, and Marxism. These were ideologies, because they offered complete world views and plans of action for all of life including politics, while humanism did not offer so complete a world view. Nevertheless, one can make an argument for using ideology or "ideological movement" to describe the differences between humanism and Scholasticism and to characterize the humanistic critique of Scholasticism. For example, Fubini twice calls humanism "un movimento ideologico" in the preface of *Umanesimo e secolarizzazione*, p. vii.

learning with ferocious criticism of medieval and contemporary learning in all fields, if that learning were not based on the classics, or did not measure up to his high standards of classical Latin eloquence.

Valla argued that language was the foundation of civilization, and that classical Latin was the acme of linguistic perfection.²¹ The disciplines flourished when the Latin language flourished, and decayed when Latin decayed. But, in Valla's view, good Latin had died in the fourth and fifth centuries after Donatus, Servius, and Priscian. They were followed by medieval ignoramuses, whose knowledge was so bad that they rendered scholars whom they taught in school more stupid than the ignorant at home. Because all learning depended on classical eloquence, medieval learning was wrong-headed. The liberal disciplines and jurisprudence depend on eloquence, while the scholar ignorant of eloquence was unworthy even to speak of theology. But now true Latin eloquence was coming back to life, and could lead to the revival of all disciplines. To help the revival of classical Latin eloquence, Valla in the *Elegantiae* provided hundreds, perhaps thousands, of examples from ancient authors to serve as models to emulate.

Valla's Latin erudition and criticism had great diffusion. At least 67 manuscripts and 151 printings of the whole work or parts of it appeared through 1577. Several epitomes of the *Elegantiae* spread Valla's message further, especially in northern Europe. Erasmus prepared the best-known epitome in or about 1488: *Paraphrasis seu potius epitome in Elegantiarum libros Laurentii Vallae*. It was eventually printed in 1529 and had over 60 more printings through 1566.²²

Valla continued his criticism of learning and values in all fields in other works. In *De vero falsoque bono*, he argued for a different Christian vision of earthly and heavenly joy than the Stoic view which was normative at the

²¹ This material comes from the first four prefaces to the six books of his *Elegantiarum linguae latinae libri sex*, most conveniently found with Italian translations in *Prosatori latini del Quattrocento*, ed. Eugenio Garin (Milan, 1952), pp. 594–623. There are many studies of the work; see in particular David Marsh, "Grammar, Method, and Polemic in Lorenzo Valla's *Elegantiae*," *Rinascimento*, 2nd ser., 19 (1979), 91–116; and Vincenzo De Caprio, "La rinascita della cultura di Roma: La tradizione latina nelle *Eleganze* di Lorenzo Valla," in *Umanesimo a Roma nel Quattrocento*, eds. Paolo Brezzi and Maristella de Panizza Lorch (Rome, 1984), pp. 163–90.

²² For a list of the manuscripts and printed editions of the work, see Jozef IJsewijn and Gilbert Tournoy, "Un primo censimento dei manoscritti e delle edizioni a stampa degli *Elegantiarum linguae latinae libri sex* di Lorenzo Valla," in *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 18 (1969), 25–41; and IJsewijn and Tournoy, "Nuovi contributi per l'elenco dei manoscritti e delle edizioni delle *Elegantiae* di Lorenzo Valla," *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 20 (1971), 1–3. See the list of printings of Erasmus' epitome of Valla's *Elegantiae* in F. van der Haeghen, *Bibliotheca Erasmi* (Ghent, 1893; repr. Nieuwkoop, 1961), pt. 1, pp. 152–53.

time.²³ In his *Repastinatio dialectice et philosophiæ*, he rejected Aristotle's categories and, hence, the Scholastic dialectical approach to theology and philosophy.²⁴ In *De falso credita et ementita Constantini donatione*, he attacked the most important historical and legal support for the papacy's claim to temporal dominion and its assumed authority to chastise secular rulers. The work had considerable resonance in the Renaissance.²⁵ Valla's *De professione religiosorum* rejected the traditional medieval belief that members of religious orders lived more meritorious lives than lay persons and deserved greater spiritual rewards.²⁶ His philological scholarship on the New Testament inaugurated Renaissance textual criticism of the Bible.²⁷ Valla began the philological study of the Greek New Testament and was the first to challenge the traditional view that Jerome produced the Vulgate (i.e., the accepted Latin translation of the New Testament). He pointed out that the Vulgate often misrepresented the Greek, and he sharply criticized medieval biblical exegetes for relying on the Vulgate and ignoring the Greek New Testament. Valla did not develop a new theology nor hold consistent

²³ For the Latin text and English translation, see Lorenzo Valla, *On Pleasure: De Voluptate*, trans. A. Kent Hieatt and Maristella Lorch. Introduction Maristella de Panizza Lorch (New York, 1977). There is a wealth of scholarship on Valla. Important studies include Franco Gaeta, *Lorenzo Valla: filologia e storia nell'umanesimo italiano* (Naples, 1955); Mario Fois, *Il pensiero cristiano di Lorenzo Valla nel quadro storico-culturale del suo ambiente* (Rome, 1969); Giovanni Di Napoli, *Lorenzo Valla: Filosofia e religione nell'umanesimo italiano* (Rome, 1971); Salvatore Camporeale, *Lorenzo Valla: Umanesimo e teologia* (Florence, 1972); and Charles Trinkaus, *In Our Image and Likeness: Humanity and Divinity in Italian Humanist Thought*, 2 vols. paged continuously (Chicago and London, 1970), pp. 103–70; 571–78; 633–50; 674–82, plus the notes at the end of the book.

²⁴ *Laurentii Valle Repastinatio dialectice et philosophiæ*, ed. Gianni Zippel, 2 vols. (Padua, 1982), provides a critical edition of the three redactions of the work.

²⁵ For the Latin text and English translation, see *The Treatise of Lorenzo Valla on the Donation of Constantine: Text and Translation into English*, ed. and trans. Christopher B. Coleman (New Haven, 1922; repr. New York, 1971). For an account of the reactions to Valla's work, see Giovanni Antonazzi, *Lorenzo Valla e la polemica sulla donazione di Costantino* (Rome, 1985).

²⁶ *Laurentii Valle De professione religiosorum*, ed. Mariarosa Cortesi (Padua, 1986). For an English translation, see Lorenzo Valla, *The Profession of the Religious and the Principal Arguments from The Falsely-Believed and Forged Donation of Constantine*, trans. and ed. Olga Zorzi Pugliese (Toronto, 1985).

²⁷ There are two redactions of Valla's work. For the first, written in 1442 and 1443, see Lorenzo Valla, *Collatio Novi Testamenti*, ed. Alessandro Perosa (Florence, 1970). The second, called *Adnotationes*, was written between 1452 and 1457, and was edited and printed by Erasmus in 1505 as *Laurentii Vallensis... in latinam Novi Testamenti interpretationem adnotationes* (Colophon: Paris: Jose Bade, 1505), not seen. There is no critical edition. On Valla's biblical criticism, see Jerry Bentley, *Humanists and Holy Writ: New Testament Scholarship in the Renaissance* (Princeton, 1983), pp. 32–69; and Christopher S. Celenza, "Renaissance humanism and the New Testament: Lorenzo Valla's Annotations to the Vulgate," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 24 (1994), 33–52, who stresses Valla's "polemicism" at 34–36. I am grateful to Chris Celenza for his help.

positions.²⁸ But he challenged some traditional beliefs and raised questions in areas long taken for granted. Erasmus and others expanded Valla's initiatives in biblical criticism, sometimes with very controversial results.

In every case other humanists followed Valla in greater or lesser degree. His criticism of traditional language, Scholastic philosophy and dialectic, papal historical claims, and the traditional text of and approach to the Bible became themes in humanism. Valla was the best example of the new humanist intellectual who, taking a critical attitude, subjected much of current learning and values to searching re-examination.

Medical humanism presents another example of the humanistic combination of respect for the ancients and challenge to received medical knowledge.²⁹ This aspect of the influence of humanism is well known to historians of medicine but perhaps less known to historians of humanism. Renaissance medical scholars inherited from the Middle Ages a series of curricular texts which were a combination of medieval compendia such as Avicenna's *Canon* and ancient Greek works, including Galen (probably 130–200), a Greek physician who spent much time in Rome, in Latin translation, often via intermediate Arab translations. Renaissance medical scholars had enormous respect for the works of Galen and wanted to recover all of his works and to read him in the original Greek. At the end of the fifteenth century the professor of medicine and scholar of Greek Nicolò Leonicensi (1428–1524), who taught at the University of Ferrara for nearly sixty years, began the process of recovering Galen in the original Greek. He edited the first Greek printings of Galen, his *Methodus medendi* and the *De arte curativa ad Glauconem*, printed in 1500. He and other medical scholars with excellent humanistic philological skills located Greek manuscripts of Galen's works, including texts previously unavailable, then edited

²⁸ This is a point made by John Monfasani, "The Theology of Lorenzo Valla," in *Humanism and Early Modern Philosophy*, eds. Jill Krayer and M.W.F. Stone (London, 2000), pp. 1–23; repr. in Monfasani, *Greeks and Latins in Renaissance Italy: Studies on Humanism and Philosophy in the 15th Century* (Aldershot, UK, 2004), study 11.

²⁹ What follows is a brief summary of a large topic with a substantial bibliography. For more on Leonicensi and his environment see Jerome J. Bylebyl, "The School of Padua: Humanistic Medicine in the Sixteenth Century," in *Health, Medicine, and Mortality in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Charles Webster (Cambridge, 1979), pp. 335–70, at 340–41; Bylebyl, "Leonicensi, Nicolò," in *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, eds. Charles C. Gillispie et al. 18 vols., 2nd printing (New York, 1981), 8: 248–50; Bylebyl, "Medicine, Philosophy, and Humanism in Renaissance Italy," in *Science and the Arts in the Renaissance*, eds. John W. Shirley and F. David Hoener (Washington, 1985), pp. 27–49; Daniela Mugnai Carrara, "Profilo di Nicolò Leonicensi," *Intrepres* 2 (1979), 169–212; eadem., *La biblioteca di Nicolò Leonicensi. Tra Aristotele e Galeno: Cultura e libri di un medico umanista* (Florence, 1991); and Vivian Nutton, "The Rise of Medical Humanism: Ferrara, 1464–1555," *Renaissance Studies* 11 (1997), 2–19, at 3–8.

and published them in Greek. Their efforts resulted in a five-volume Greek *editio princeps* of Galen published by the Aldine Press in 1525.

The medical humanists began to translate Galen into more reliable Latin for general university use. Leoniceno led the way with new translations of eleven of Galen's works. These efforts culminated in the monumental folio-sized, ten-part (usually published in seven volumes) Latin edition of most of Galen, published by the Giunti Press of Venice in 1541, with the editing and translating done by Agostino Gadaldino (1515–75), a physician in Padua, Leoniceno, Giovanni Battista Da Monte (1489–1551), professor of medicine at Padua and a pioneer in clinical medicine, other north Italian scholars, and Andreas Vesalius (1514–64). In the preface to volume one of the immense work, Gadaldino explains that the scholars involved in the project had endeavored to translate all of Galen's works that had not yet been translated. Because mistakes in the manuscripts employed for previous translations had resulted in poor translations, men "learned in languages as well as in medicine" had consulted better Greek manuscripts and from them made more accurate translations.³⁰ It was a good statement of the humanistic purpose. The work was an immediate success; it was reprinted eight times between 1550 and 1625, an extraordinary record for such a large work, while hundreds of printings of individual texts of Galen appeared. The new Latin translations steadily replaced medieval translations.

Leoniceno also strongly criticized his medieval Arab and Christian predecessors for their bad translations, mistaken interpretations, and errors in transmitting Greek medicine. Most important, in a short treatise entitled *De tribus doctrinis ordinatis secundum Galeni* of 1508 he argued for methodological change in teaching and research in medicine.³¹ Galen

³⁰ "Deinde adhibitis nonnullis doctis & tam linguarum peritia quam medicina eruditissimis viris, libros omnes Galeni & qui nondum fuerant latinate donati, in latinum vertendos." *Galenii omnia opera nunc primum in unum corpus redacta... Librorum indicem et diligentiam proximus quaternio demonstrabit* (Venetiis: Apud haeredes Lucaeantonij Iunte Florentini, 1541), sig. ij recto. This is the first volume of the monumental edition. Charles D. O'Malley, *Andreas Vesalius of Brussels 1514–1564* (Berkeley, 1965), pp. 102–04, provides an English translation of most of the preface. For a full description of the edition, see Paolo Camerini, *Annali dei Giunti: Venezia*, vol. 1 in 2 pts. (Florence, 1962–63), pt. 1, item 457. For a census of Renaissance Galen editions and commentaries, see Richard J. Durling, "A Chronological Census of Renaissance Editions and Translations of Galen," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 24 (1961), 240–305.

³¹ It is one of three treatises in a short work whose collective title is *Nicolai Leoniceni in libros Galeni e greca in latinam linguam a se translatos prefatio communis... Galeni Ars Medicinalis Nicolao Leoniceno interprete que et Ars Parva dicitur... Eiusdem de tribus doctrinis ordinatis secundum Galeni sententiam opus* (Venice, 1508), not seen. The analysis in this and the following paragraph is based on Neal W. Gilbert, *Renaissance Concepts of Method* (New York, 1960), pp. 12–23, 98–107; William P.D. Wightman, "Quid sit Methodus? 'Method' in

discussed method in medical research in the first chapter of his *Ars medica*. He wrote that one might teach a subject in three ways: by analysis, according to the end or purpose of the topic, by synthesis, or by creating a series of definitions. The last was useful for organizing the whole of a discipline. But the looseness of Galen's terminology, his philosophical eclecticism, and lack of clarity left readers puzzled. Medieval medical scholars resolved the difficulty by imposing an Aristotelian framework; in effect, they reduced Galen's method to Aristotelian demonstration and dialectic. Leoniceno rejected this; indeed, he sharply criticized various medieval commentators on the treatise. He freed Galen's method from what he saw as enveloping Aristotelian dialectic and proposed new ways of approaching the text. He argued that Galen had really written about techniques of teaching, not methods of inquiry. Leoniceno then argued that Galen had two general methods that might be employed in medicine or any other science: (1) a method relying on logical demonstration to be used for discussing particular aspects of questions in the science of medicine and (2) a broader method, not necessarily logical demonstration, which might order the entire contents of a science. The latter method was clearly non-Aristotelian. Leoniceno was able to reach these conclusions because of his humanist knowledge and approach. His Greek was excellent, and he had a wide knowledge of ancient Greek scientific sources which enabled him to understand Galen in a non-Aristotelian way.

Leoniceno's criticism of the medieval methodological approach, and especially his clarification of Galen's second method, attracted immediate attention in the form of new commentaries on Galen's work. Most important, medical scholars increasingly wrote independent treatises on chosen individual topics, rather than commenting on a text of Galen or Aristotle, the traditional approach. And they became bolder in their views.

Many medical scholars with humanistic training and critical attitudes followed Leoniceno. And they quickly reached a new stage of criticizing Galen, their ancient icon. Andreas Vesalius, a Belgian scholar who taught at the University of Padua in the crucial years 1537 to 1543, was typical if more brilliant than his peers. He was very much a medical humanist with a good knowledge of Greek. He criticized the medieval medical writers and

Sixteenth Century Medical Teaching and 'Discovery,'" *Journal of the History of Medicine* 19 (1964), 360–76; Jerome J. Bylebyl, "Leoniceno, Nicolò," p. 249; and William F. Edwards, "Niccolò Leoniceno and the Origins of Humanist Discussion of Method," in *Philosophy and Humanism: Renaissance Essays in Honor of Paul Oskar Kristeller*, ed. Edward P. Mahoney (New York, 1976), pp. 283–305.

wished to restore medicine to the tradition of the ancients. He translated an anatomical work by Galen and contributed to the Latin Galen edition. He greatly respected Galen. But he also criticized him whenever he believed that he was incorrect, which was often.

Vesalius' lengthy preface to his famous *De humani corporis fabrica* (Basel, 1543) is a combination of manifesto about the inadequacies of the traditional practice of anatomy, and medicine generally, and his own journey to a better way. Vesalius, following the Leoniceno's second approach, did not cast his book as a commentary on Galen or a discussion of some parts of the body. Rather, he wrote a comprehensive treatise on human anatomy in which he believed that he was presenting a new approach. Vesalius accomplished three things in his work that encapsulated principles of humanism. He criticized medieval medical authorities, and he turned to the ancient Galen for a better way. But then he evaluated Galen's teaching against his own dissections and pointed out Galen's errors when he found them. When respect for antiquity and the culture of criticism clashed, criticism prevailed.

The preface to *De fabrica* demonstrates the interaction of humanist respect for antiquity and its culture of criticism. Early in the preface Vesalius calls Galen "after Hippocrates the prince of medicine," because he conducted anatomical dissections with his own hands, rather than leaving it to others to do the cutting.³² But after the invasions of the Goths (fifth century) and the reign of Mansor, King of Persia (745–775), "medicine began to be maimed by the neglect of that primary instrument, the hand." The references to the Gothic invasions of Rome and to Mansor are a means of criticizing both Christian and Arab medical authorities. A little later he reiterates and broadens his criticism to address all learning and all medicine in the Middle Ages:

Especially after the devastation of the Goths when all the sciences, formerly so flourishing and fittingly practiced, had decayed, the most fashionable physicians, first in Italy in imitation of the old Romans, despising the use of the hands, began to relegate to their slaves those things which had to be done manually for their patients.

³² All quotes in this paragraph come from Vesalius' preface, dated August 1, 1542, Padua, as translated by O'Malley, *Vesalius*, pp. 317–24, quotes at pp. 317, 318, 321. The Latin text with French translation is found in Vesalius, *La fabrique du corps humain: Edition bilingue Latin-Français*, ed. and trans. Louis Bakelants, foreword by Claire Ambroselli, Anne Fagot-Largeault, and Christiane Sinding (Arles, 1987), 18–51. Despite the title, this work has only the preface.

He meant that physicians no longer did anatomical dissections themselves nor took an active role in other medical procedures. Vesalius also charges that physicians in these centuries simply prescribed drugs and diet and abandoned “the investigation of nature.” He also laments the neglect of the study of medicinal simples, i.e., the therapeutic qualities of a “simple,” viz., an individual plant producing a single medicinal substance or drug, as opposed to a compound drug made from several plants. “And so in the course of time the art of treatment has been so miserably distorted.” Vesalius laments the loss of many ancient medical works, including about half of Galen’s anatomical books, as a consequence of the “slothfulness of physicians.” Others “shamefully reduced Galen into brief compendia.” This is a medical animadversion on the familiar Renaissance topos of medieval decline after the greatness of the ancients.

Vesalius then writes about the rebirth of medicine in his own time by embracing the approach of the ancients to anatomy, despite “the ridiculous fashion of the schools.” At the University of Padua, and at Bologna, where he conducted an anatomy, Vesalius affirms that he “demonstrated and taught in such a way that there was nothing in my procedure that varied from the tradition of the ancients.”³³

Although Vesalius praises Galen, he also rebukes him because “he never dissected a human body.”³⁴ Rather, he dissected apes and monkeys and arrived at wrong information. Vesalius writes that “at present I do not intend to criticize the false teachings of Galen, easily prince of professors of dissection.” But, of course, he does exactly that. Vesalius contends that Galen’s description was “incorrect in well over two hundred instances relating to the human structure and its use and function.” And he refers to “my frequent indication of the falsity of Galen’s teachings” to be found in the body of the book.

Vesalius’ career encapsulated how the humanistic combination of respect for the classics and criticism of predecessors led to intellectual progress. Vesalius first criticized medieval medical writers and favored the ancient Galen. He used his Greek and philological skills to read Galen more carefully in the original and to produce critical editions and better Latin translations of some of Galen’s works. Galen’s emphasis on anatomical study and his instructions on how to conduct a dissection inspired and

³³ Quotes in this paragraph come from Vesalius’ preface in O’Malley, *Vesalius*, pp. 320, 321.

³⁴ Quotes in this paragraph come from Vesalius’ preface in O’Malley, *Vesalius*, pp. 321, 323.

prepared Vesalius. But when his own anatomical dissections demonstrated that Galen was wrong, he criticized and corrected Galen. The critical spirit of the humanists spared none and proved stronger than their respect for the ancients when the ancients were wrong.

It may seem strange at first glance, but Vesalius and Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527) had the same methodology. Each adopted and implemented humanism's program of combining classical learning and its culture of criticism in order to produce original learning. Each studied ancient texts carefully, Machiavelli those on history and politics, above all Livy's history of Rome, and Vesalius the medical works of Galen and Hippocrates. Study of ancient works offered useful knowledge, historical context, and a sharpened analytical perception with which to understand the present. For Vesalius, Galen's treatise on how to conduct anatomical dissections was very useful in his own dissections. Both then added present knowledge to the mix, Machiavelli first-hand observations of current politics, military affairs, and diplomacy, Vesalius the results of his own anatomical dissections. Each was able to weigh what the classics taught against his own observations. Each had the ability and judgment to accept what was accurate and useful from the classics and to correct or discard what was not. But there was one major difference. Many other anatomists openly followed the lead of Vesalius and made additional anatomical discoveries. But Machiavelli had no "school," because few of his followers admitted their indebtedness.

Medical botany offers another example of the impact of humanistic ancient learning and critical spirit. Leoniceno's criticism of the accuracy of Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* had a significant impact on medical botany. In 1492 he published *De Plinii et plurium aliorum medicorum in medicina erroribus*.³⁵ It did two things. Like other humanists, he pointed out the errors that had crept into Pliny's text over the centuries. But he also argued that Pliny himself had made many mistakes. Pliny was particularly responsible for incorrect terminology, e.g., plants and drugs wrongly labeled and the use of multiple names for the same herb. Leoniceno asserted that

³⁵ See Lynn Thorndike, "The Attack on Pliny," in Thorndike, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, 4 (New York, 1934), pp. 593–610; Mugnai Carrara, "Profilo di Leoniceno," pp. 195–96; Charles G. Nauert Jr., "Humanists, Scientists, and Pliny: Changing Approaches to a Classical Author," *American Historical Review* 84 (1979), 72–85; idem, "Plinius Secundus (*Naturalis Historia*)," *Catalogus translationum et commentariorum: Mediaeval and Renaissance Latin Translations and Commentaries: Annotated Lists and Guides*, vol. 4, eds. F. Edward Cranz and Paul Oskar Kristeller (Washington, D.C., 1980), pp. 297–422; and John F. D'Amico, *Theory and Practice in Renaissance Textual Criticism: Beatus Rhenanus Between Conjecture and History* (Berkeley, 1988), pp. 72–98.

Pliny had often garbled the information found in Greek sources. Other humanists working on Pliny's difficult text initially rejected Leoniceno's argument. But later medical botanists accepted Leoniceno's point that even a treasured ancient source had to meet standards of factual accuracy and utility. In summary, because they shared the humanistic combination of knowledge of the ancients, philological skill and, above all, a critical attitude, the medical humanists moved from criticism of medieval writers, to editing and translating ancient texts, to criticism of ancient authorities.

Examples can be adduced from other areas. Even though Aristotle continued to dominate natural philosophy, some philosophers of the late Renaissance strongly criticized Aristotle and offered alternatives. The most prominent was Francesco Patrizi da Cherso (1529–1597), who completely rejected Aristotle and offered Plato as an alternative. In his *Discussiones peripateticae* (1571; expanded edition 1581), Patrizi used humanistic philological techniques and an extensive knowledge of Greek sources in order to criticize Aristotle and Aristotelianism.³⁶ He argued that Aristotle had lived a dissolute life, that he wrote only 4 of the 747 titles attributed to him at one time or another, that he merely compiled the work of earlier Greek scientists, and manifested serious philosophical flaws. Most important, Patrizi offered an alternative, a complex Platonic natural philosophy full of novel statements, some strange, others perceptive. For example, he raised mathematics to a higher level of importance than did Aristotelianism. He also wished to substitute Plato and a coalition of sources, including works from Christian Revelation, Church Fathers, Neoplatonists, and other ancient philosophers, as a theological substitute for the alliance of Christianity and Aristotelianism taught in Italian schools of theology.

By contrast, Italian humanists did not produce much political criticism. They did not often bite the hands of princes and republican governments who fed them. They wrote much more criticism of churchmen, from worldly prelates to ignorant friars. Nevertheless, humanists did produce some political criticism. Inspired by Lucian, Leon Battista Alberti (1404–1472) wrote *Momus*,

³⁶ For discussions of Patrizi's thought, see Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Eight Philosophers of the Italian Renaissance* (Stanford, 1964), pp. 10–26, 175–77, 186–87; Cesare Vasoli, *Immagini umanistiche* (Naples, 1983), pp. 527–83; idem, *Francesco Patrizi da Cherso* (Rome, 1989); Maria Muccillo, "La vita e le opere di Aristotele nelle *Discussiones peripateticae* di Francesco Patrizi da Cherso," *Rinascimento*, 2nd ser., 21 (1981), 53–119; eadem, "Il platonismo all'Università di Roma: Francesco Patrizi," in *Roma e lo Studium Urbis: Spazio urbano e cultura dal Quattro al Seicento*, ed. Paolo Cherubin (Rome, 1992), pp. 200–47; Brian P. Copenhaver and Charles B. Schmitt, *Renaissance Philosophy* (Oxford and New York, 1992), pp. 187–95; and Muccillo, *Platonismo, ermetismo e 'prisca theologia': Ricerche di storiografia filosofica rinascimentale* (Florence, 1996), pp. 73–193.

begun in 1443 and published in 1450.³⁷ It was a complex, wide-ranging satire, some of which reads as political criticism of contemporary politics. Although irony often obscured Alberti's point of view, *Momus* criticized princes for lying, treachery, favoritism, and their lack of gravity and steadfastness. Alberti also lamented militarism, and wondered why the gods rewarded the unjust. The sixteenth-century Italian vernacular social critic Anton Francesco Doni (1513–1574) expanded Alberti's themes in much sharper words and expressive cynicism directed against the Italian political and social hierarchy.³⁸ The northern humanists Desiderius Erasmus (1467–1536) and Thomas More (c. 1478–1535), and others influenced by Lucian, wrote wide-ranging works of political, social, and religious criticism.³⁹

Schools and Universities

The combination of scholarly skills, looking at the ancient world as a model and example to follow, and criticism of accepted knowledge and values made humanism a cultural movement that promoted change in many areas. But the impact of humanism on learning and society as a whole depended on the extent to which humanism found a home in the major institutions of learning, schools and universities. Or to state this point in other words, a large part of the influence of humanism came as a consequence of the institutional roles that humanists and men with humanist training achieved. When humanists and others with humanist training and culture of criticism found positions, including leadership roles, in institutions of learning, their criticisms and new scholarship were implemented and had great influence. When they were not part of schools and universities, their criticism had little effect.

The relative success of humanists and others imbued with humanistic training in different institutions of learning, or parts of them, supports

³⁷ Leon Battista Alberti, *Momus*, ed. Virginia Brown and trans. Sarah Knight (Cambridge, MA, 2003), pp. 124–5, 126–7, 130–31, 134–35, 138–39, 162–63, 204–05. See also David Marsh, *Lucian and the Latins: Humor and Humanism in the Early Renaissance* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1998), from the index.

³⁸ Anton Francesco Doni, *I mondi e gli inferni*, ed. Patrizia Pellizzari, intro. Marziano Guglielminetti (Turin, 1994); and Paul F. Grendler, *Critics of the Italian World, 1530–1560: Anton Francesco Doni, Nicolò Franco, and Ortensio Lando* (Madison, WI, 1969), esp. pp. 70–103, 162–77.

³⁹ In addition to Erasmus and More, whose works are well known, see Christopher Robinson, *Lucian and His Influence in Europe* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1979), pp. 81–137, 165–97; and Marsh, *Lucian and the Latins*.

this point. Humanists achieved their greatest and most successful institutional penetration in pre-university Latin schools. They became the Latin schoolmasters of Italy and Europe. Even Europe's division into Catholic and Protestant did not change this. Both the Jesuits and the Protestant schoolmasters who taught in the Protestant academies which sprang up in northern Europe were excellent humanists. Both taught the Latin and Greek classics according to humanistic principles and shared the humanist cultural hostility toward medieval learning plus, in the case of the Protestants, hostility against medieval religion.⁴⁰ Humanists and those with humanist training and outlet also had great success in finding positions as professors of grammar and rhetoric and Greek in Italian universities; others with humanistic training and expertise in medicine or mathematics became professors in these disciplines.⁴¹ And after some hard and noisy battles against theologians, humanists also gained positions in northern universities, such as those in Germany.⁴²

But when humanists did not become members of the institutions that taught and practiced a discipline, humanism had little influence. Italian law and theology offer two examples. Lorenzo Valla also attacked the scholarship and teaching of Italian civil jurisprudence. He charged that Bartolo da Sassoferrato (1313/14–1357), Baldo degli Ubaldi (c. 1327–1400), and the other giants of Italian jurisprudence wrote barbarous Latin, were ignorant of history, and distorted the meaning of legal passages in the *Digest*, the foundation of civil jurisprudence. He made these criticisms in January and February 1433 while teaching at the University of Pavia, but so enraged the legists that Valla hurriedly fled the city and his teaching post. Undaunted, he continued his criticism of medieval and contemporary jurisprudence in the *Elegantiae*.⁴³ Other humanists repeated Valla's charges. In the sixteenth

⁴⁰ For the Jesuits, see the *Ratio studiorum* (1599), which prescribes the curriculum for Jesuit schools. For an English translation, see *St. Ignatius and the Ratio Studiorum*, ed. Edward A. Fitzpatrick (New York, 1933), pp. 119–254. There is a great deal of information about the preparation of and reactions to the *Ratio studiorum* in *Monumenta paedagogica Societatis Iesu*, ed. Ladislaus Lukács, vols. 5–7 (Rome, 1986–92). Johann Sturm (1507–89) and his academy at Strasbourg were enormously influential on Protestant education. Lewis Spitz and Barbara Sher Tinsley, *Johann Sturm on Education: The Reformation and Humanist Learning* (St. Louis, 1995).

⁴¹ Grendler, *Universities*, chaps. 6, 9, and 12.

⁴² See Charles G. Nauert, Jr., "Humanists, Scholastics, and the Struggle to Reform the University of Cologne," in *Humanismus in Köln*, ed. James Mehl (Cologne, 1991), pp. 40–75; idem, *Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 124–32; and Erika Rummel, *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate in the Renaissance and Reformation* (Cambridge, MA, 1995), esp. chap. 4, "The Debate at the Universities," pp. 63–95, 224–30.

⁴³ Mario Speroni, "Lorenzo Valla a Pavia: Il libellus contro Bartolo," *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen archiven und bibliotheken* 59 (1979), 453–67, gives a good account

century a handful of Italian legal scholars with good humanistic skills produced a critical edition of the *Digest* in 1553, a landmark of Renaissance textual criticism and legal scholarship.⁴⁴ But Italian legal scholars made little use of it, and it was not reprinted in the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries. Most Italian legists continued to cite the *Vulgata*, the traditional version of the *Digest* with its errors, which had been in use for centuries. Italian legal scholarship, practice, and teaching went on much as before. Italian legists practiced the same kind of legal scholarship as their fourteenth-century predecessors through the Renaissance and beyond.

Why did Italian legal scholarship fail to change? The chief reason is that Italian faculties of law did not welcome humanistically trained legal scholars into their midst. And, it should be said, few humanists were interested in becoming professors of law. Humanistic jurisprudence found greater welcome in French and German universities. But even when it was taught and promoted vigorously, it did not produce great change in the research and teaching of law.⁴⁵

Theology provides an even more instructive example of the importance of institutions in determining whether or not humanistic criticism and scholarly techniques might change a discipline. Humanism had little influence on religious scholarship in Italy. This was not because humanists had no interest in theology or that the papacy was hostile to humanists. Indeed, numerous humanists found lucrative employment in the Roman *curia* or in the households of cardinals and popes. And a few Roman humanists developed a humanistic approach to theology.⁴⁶ But in the century between Lorenzo Valla's annotations on the New Testament and the opening of the Council of Trent in 1545, Italian humanists and theologians seldom ad-

of the episode. For his additional criticism of medieval and contemporary jurisprudence in the *Elegantiae*, see *Prosatori latini del Quattrocento*, pp. 606–13. See also Gaeta, *Lorenzo Valla*, pp. 120–26, Domenico Maffei, *Gli inizi dell'umanesimo giuridico* (Milan, 1956), pp. 99–101; Donald R. Kelley, *Foundations of Modern Historical Scholarship: Language, Law, and History in the French Renaissance* (New York, 1970), pp. 39–43; and Hans Erich Troje, *Humanistische Jurisprudenz: Studien zur europäischen Rechtswissenschaft unter dem Einfluss des Humanismus* (Goldbach, 1993).

⁴⁴ For the story, see Giovanni Gualandi, "Per la storia della *Editio princeps* delle *Pandette* fiorentine di Lelio Torelli," in *Le Pandette di Giustiniano: Storia e fortuna di un codice illustre* (Florence, 1986), pp. 143–98, and the other articles in *Le Pandette di Giustiniano*. See also Grendler, *Universities*, pp. 436–43, for the Florentine *Pandects*, and pp. 430–73, for the teaching of law in Italian universities.

⁴⁵ This is the argument of Troje, *Humanistische Jurisprudenz*.
⁴⁶ For the employment of humanists in Rome and the interest that a few had in theology, see John F. D'Amico, *Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome: Humanists and Churchmen on the Eve of the Reformation* (Baltimore, 1983).

dressed each other.⁴⁷ This is largely because they inhabited different institutions. Almost all Italian theologians were members of medieval religious orders who lived and taught in monastic order *studia*. Only a handful taught in universities. By contrast, humanists, who were overwhelmingly laymen, taught in universities and Latin schools, or served as secretaries to princes and republics. Even the humanists who served prelates had little contact with theologians, because the vast majority of popes, cardinals, and bishops were not trained as theologians but as legists.⁴⁸

In northern Europe, by contrast, from about 1500, humanists and theologians coexisted inside universities. Humanists taught arts subjects at the undergraduate level, and theologians taught theology. Arts and theology were the most important subjects, while medicine and law played small roles, in most northern European, especially German, universities. Sometimes the members of a medieval monastic order played key, almost dominant, roles in the university, e.g., the Augustinian Hermits at the University of Wittenberg.⁴⁹ Monks teaching theology and lay humanists teaching arts could not avoid each other in small universities. Their shared institutional life did not make them love each other, and they fought some memorable battles. The conflicts often started because the humanists told the theologians that they were doing theology the wrong way, another manifestation of the humanistic critical spirit, and theologians replied in kind.⁵⁰ But at least they communicated.

Then came the magisterial Reformation. This is not the place to enter into the scholarly debate concerning the extent to which humanism influenced

⁴⁷ A rare exception is the 1554 attack against Erasmians by the Dominican theologian Girolamo Vielmi (d. 1582), then teaching Thomistic theology at the University of Padua. See Antonino Poppi, "Una difesa della teologia scolastica contro gli erasmiani. La prolusione di Girolamo Vielmi al corso di teologia 'in via Thomae' (1554)," in idem, *Ricerche sulla teologia e la scienza nella Scuola padovana del Cinque e Seicento* (Catanzaro, 2001), pp. 69–86.

⁴⁸ There is no study of the education of Italian prelates between 1400 and 1600. But the biographies of popes and many cardinals found in Pastor, *History of the Popes*, uncover numerous popes and cardinals who were trained as lawyers and very few with degrees in theology.

⁴⁹ Johannes von Staupitz (1460/69–1524), co-founder along with Elector Frederick of Saxony of the University of Wittenberg in 1502, was an Augustinian Hermit (and later vicar-general of the order) who organized the establishment of a monastery in Wittenberg which became the nucleus of the university. The Augustinian Hermits were obligated to provide professors of moral philosophy and biblical exegesis for the new university. Other Augustinian Hermits also taught and studied at Wittenberg, while the order's cloister and church provided living and teaching quarters for professors and students. Ernest G. Schwiebert, *Luther and His Times: The Reformation from a New Perspective* (St. Louis, 1950), pp. 224–25; idem, *The Reformation*, 2 vols. paged continuously (Minneapolis, 1996), pp. 222, 244, 247.

⁵⁰ Rummel, *Humanist-Scholastic Debate*, pp. 63–95; Nauert, "Humanists, Scholastics."

Ulrich Zwingli, Martin Luther, and Jean Calvin.⁵¹ But it is undeniable that humanism had some influence on them, and they certainly adopted the culture of criticism. Even more important, almost all of the early followers and lieutenants of Zwingli, Luther, and Calvin came from the ranks of young humanists. They deserted Erasmus and placed their humanistic scholarly techniques, sometimes under pressure and threat, in the service of the Protestant Reformation as schoolmasters, university scholars, preachers, and advisers to princes.⁵² When the founders of the magisterial Reformation died, these young humanists turned Reformers took their places. From their powerful institutional positions as professors of theology and Scripture in Protestant universities and academies, as well as advisers to princes, they deployed their scholarly humanistic skills and culture of criticism in battle against Catholicism and other varieties of Protestantism.⁵³ Before long, Calvinists disputed with Lutherans, Gnesio-Lutherans fought Philippist Lutherans, and Calvinists battled over the meaning of predestination. It was a classic demonstration of how humanist learning and critical culture had great impact in another area of learning, theology and, consequently, society as a whole, when humanists reached powerful positions in schools, academies, and universities.

Thus, humanism combined a set of scholarly skills, admiration for the learning, literature, and science of the ancient world, and a sharp critical attitude. Lorenzo Valla best embodied these values and culture in the fifteenth century, and others, such as the medical humanists, followed his example in the sixteenth century. Humanists created or provoked much intellectual ferment and change. But the success or failure of humanism to effect intellectual change depended greatly on the extent to which humanists

⁵¹ Three scholars who find the influence of humanism on Luther to have been strong are Helmar Junghaus, *Der junge Luther und die Humanisten* (Göttingen, 1985); Lewis W. Spitz, *Luther and German Humanism* (Aldershot, 1996), Studies 6–10; and Timothy P. Dost, *Renaissance Humanism in Support of the Gospel in Luther's Early Correspondence: Taking all things captive* (Aldershot, 2001).

⁵² There is a large literature on this topic. Essential studies are Bernd Moeller, "The German Humanists and the Beginnings of the Reformation," in idem, *Imperial Cities and the Reformation: Three Essays*, eds. and trans. H.C. Erik Midelfort and Mark U. Edwards, Jr. (Philadelphia, 1972; repr. Durham, 1982), pp. 19–38; Lewis W. Spitz, *Luther and German Humanism*, Studies 1–5; and Erika Rummel, *The Confessionalization of Humanism in Reformation Germany* (Oxford and New York, 2000).

⁵³ For more, see Paul F. Grendler, "The Universities of the Renaissance and Reformation," *Renaissance Quarterly* 57 (2004), 1–42, at 21–23, 29–37. For the role of universities in the training of Lutheran clergy, see Thomas Kaufmann, "The Clergy and the Theological Culture of the Age: The Education of Lutheran Pastors in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *The Protestant Clergy of Early Modern Europe*, eds. C. Scott Dixon and Luis Schorn-Schütte (Houndsmill, Hampshire, and New York, 2003), pp. 120–36, 227–31.

found homes, i.e., places to exercise their skills and influence others, in the major institutions of learning of the day, schools and universities. A Latin pre-university education based on the classics became the norm for the training of the elite in Europe. But humanism had less impact on law and religion because humanists did not penetrate these faculties in significant numbers in Italy. In Germany, by contrast, humanistically inclined professors of theology created and sustained the Protestant Reformation.

CURIAL HUMANISM SEEN THROUGH THE PRISM OF THE PAPAL LIBRARY

Massimo Miglio

The multifaceted historical perception of Italian humanism, especially with regard to the Quattrocento, that has evolved in the last several years makes it necessary to define humanism's diverse identities as articulated in the main cultural centers of Italy, such as Milan, Venice, Padua, and Naples.¹ For this reason, it is also necessary to attempt to define the characteristics of humanistic culture that developed at the papal court and to evaluate its ever evolving nature because of the particular personalities of some of the popes (Nicholas V, Pius II, Paul II, and Sixtus IV, for example) but, above all, because of the unique socio-cultural composition of the Roman court, which was made up of laymen, clerics, and intellectuals from different regions of Italy and Europe. These individuals were called upon to address issues that were both religious and secular.

The Roman court was unquestionably atypical with respect to other courts. This uniqueness was due to its mingling of the spiritual with the temporal, to its having to assert itself *vis-à-vis* the city of Rome and the Papal States as well as all of Christendom, to its being strongly rooted in the social reality of Italy, and to its international composition even though the papal court, contrary to popular belief, was composed primarily of Italians; between 1471 and 1527 around 60% of the court personnel were Italian. The Roman court and the papal Curia (I should note, however, that the Curia constituted only part of the Roman court) were at this time *the* court par excellence. This court has been appropriately defined as a *universal aristocracy* because it developed out of the need for a solid, political rapport between the papal court and the entire political reality of Italy and Europe, a rapport that presupposed a highly defined system of relationships that could deal successfully with the power structures of other institutions. As such, during the Quattrocento and the first decades of the Cinquecento, Rome was, as far as Italy was concerned, the center

¹ Francesco Tateo, "Geografia della cultura letteraria," in *Le Italie del tardo Medioevo*, ed. Sergio Gensini (Pisa, 1990), pp. 257-73.

of complex and delicate political games that found a point of reference in the Curia itself.

The Roman court served as the eyes and ears through which one saw and heard everything that happened in the world and through which one tried to intervene on behalf of the interests of Rome, using as effectively as possible one's connections with the cosmopolitan personnel, who staffed the curial offices, in a dialectic relationship with other components present in the city—courtiers, curial officials, the municipal workforce, and the *forenses*, all of whom had diverse interests to defend, depending upon their origins, personal histories, cultural backgrounds and professional interests. The city was the place of debate, the court of mediation, and the judgment hall of decisions.

In this essay, I will define curial humanism by using as a yardstick the history and contents of the papal library, which today we commonly call the Vatican Library. I believe this is a valid approach even though the differences between the library of those days and that of today are significant. The papal library in the Middle Ages was only partially a court library; nevertheless, it reflected quite clearly the cultural interests of the Curia, in all of its manifold, socio-political dimensions. It was simultaneously an ecclesiastical library and a library of state, a library of government and of humanistic culture, a library for display and the personal library of the pope. This multi-faceted nature of the papal library was accentuated from the moment it was opened to the scholarly community and acquired officials to administer it in 1475. In the decades leading to this opening, the role of the papal library, far from being simplified, became ever more diversified in conformity with the cultural orientation of each ruling pope.

Tradition and Innovation in the Papal Library

Tradition and innovation characterized the history of the medieval church. Oral and written traditions were the bedrocks of Christianity; consequently, preoccupation with oral and written instruction was a constant of the Christian hierarchy, and it was the Christian hierarchy that was entrusted with the teaching of the *verbo* and the texts that transmitted it. Tradition and innovation, then, intermingled continuously in both the oral and written facets of church culture. Indeed, this *modus operandi* was continued in Rome, during the Quattrocento, when there emerged a new interest in the library as a consequence of the fascination (a fascination that always had a political slant) with the revival of antiquity and with the rediscovery

of the classics, which were being proposed as models. This, in turn, generated a rediscovery and a reconsideration of medieval libraries and also led to the founding of new book centers both private and public. The period that separates Cencio dei Rustici's invective in 1416 against those who had destroyed or were destroying great libraries² and the opening of the Vatican Library to the public in 1475 is minimal in a temporal sense but enormous in an ideological and cultural sense. The change in the status of the library that occurred in this period was not due solely to the curial officials or to the will of the pope. To assume so would be reductive. Rather, it was the result of numerous, socially diverse prerogatives.³

That the papal library (be it private or public) was not the expression of a single person but of an entire society is attested to, for example, by the *laudatio* written by Lapo da Castiglionchio the Younger in honor of Cardinal Giordano Orsini. This *laudatio* is replete with the standard cultural attributes but has, as one of its central themes, Orsini's search for books in far-off places. Orsini's book hunting, according to Lapo, was accomplished at the expense of dangerous, costly trips that he took even in his old age. With these searches, Lapo goes on to note, Orsini ushered in a new manuscript tradition, introduced previously unknown authors, and gathered in Rome enough books for several cities "so that scholars, without labor and without cost, could enjoy them."⁴ This same notion was reiterated by Orsini himself in his will: "*ut in urbe Romana multiplicentur, quantum fieri poterit, viri letterati et scientifici.*"⁵ But if it is true that the

² Ludwig Bertalot, "Cincius Romanus und seine Briefe," in *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* 21 (1929–1930), 209–55; I am citing from its reprint in idem, *Studien zum italienischen und deutschen Humanismus*, ed. Paul O. Kristeller, 2 (Rome, 1975), pp. 144–47; see also Massimo Miglio, "Materiali e ipotesi per una ricerca," in *Scrittura, biblioteche e stampa a Roma nel Quattrocento. Aspetti e problemi*, eds. C. Bianca et al. (Vatican City, 1980), pp. 15–31, repr. in M. Miglio, *Scritture, scrittori e storia*, 2 vols. (Manziana, 1993), 2:19–32.

³ Giuseppe Lombardi, "Inventari di biblioteche romane del Quattrocento: un panorama," in idem, *Saggi* (Rome, 2003), pp. 337–61; and see also idem, "Son qui più libri che 'n tucto passato; Aspetti del libro a corte nella Roma del Quattrocento," in *ibid.*, pp. 143–58.

⁴ "Tu enim comparandorum librorum gratia, affectus etate, longissima itinera et difficillima, ad remotissimas regiones magnis sumptibus, labore, periculo suscepisti. Tu veteres permultos doctissimos viros, inventis eorum operibus quae ante ignorabantur ab oblivione hominum et silentio vendicasti. Nam ut notos et vulgatos praeteream, qui permulti sunt abs te latinis hominibus restituti, complurimos in lucem protulisti nobis, quorum ne nomina quidem noveramus. Itaque tot iam solus libros, ut audio, in omni genere doctrine in tuam urbem undique contulisti, qui plurimis civitatibus ad legendum sufficerent, ut illis homines discendi cupidi sine labore, sine sumptu, sine molestia uterentur." Cited in Giuseppe Lombardi, "La biblioteca di Giordano Orsini (c. 1360–1438)," in idem, *Saggi*, p. 34 n. 28. All translations, unless otherwise noted, are my own.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

culture of the papal court was always more complex than was reflected by the papal library, it is also true that the papal library reflected prevalent cultural trends of the various papacies.

The Papal Library at Avignon

To prove this point, I will give a history of the papal library beginning in the middle of the Trecento, when, as we know, the papal court was at Avignon and when the papal library was restructured following the complicated move from Rome.⁶ The first inventory of the newly reconstituted papal library (dispersed in various locations throughout the papal residence), which was compiled in 1369 in anticipation of the papal court's return to Rome, listed more than 2000 volumes: bibles, writings of the Church Fathers, juridical works above all canonical, works of theology, collections of sermons, a few manuscripts of Aristotle, a few chronicles, a few medical texts, and some works of rhetoric. Virtually all the works were in Latin.⁷ There was no significant presence of classical works (about 30 manuscripts), even though some Avignon popes, such as John XXII, had distinguished themselves by acquiring classical manuscripts of authors such as Vegetius, Seneca, and Pliny, the *Almagest* of Ptolemy, and even though Gregory XI tried to acquire the works of Cicero and Pompeius Trogus, and, at the death of Petrarch, asked to have the works of the poet copied.⁸ These were all significant choices that underlined the importance that the papal court gave to law, rhetoric, oratory, and the Latin language.

Only in the period of the Schism and with the pontificate of Benedict XIII (Pedro de Luna), the library, at Avignon first and at Peñíscola later, revealed a strong presence of classical works, and it became involved with the great humanist movement. But even in these circumstances, as was often the case with the papal library, it was difficult to distinguish between the personal library of the pope and that of the court.

The exceptionally learned Pedro de Luna assembled a prominent group of humanists at Avignon and Peñíscola that included Jean Muret, Galeotto da

⁶ M.-H. Jullien de Pommerol and Jacques Monfrin, *La Bibliothèque pontificale à Avignon et à Peñíscola pendant le Grand Schisme d'Occident et sa dispersion. Inventaires et concordances*, 2 vols. (Rome, 1991).

⁷ Franz Ehrle, *Historia bibliothecae Romanorum pontificum tum Bonifatianae tum Avenionensis*, 1 (Rome, 1890), pp. 284–432; Jullien de Pommerol and Monfrin, *La Bibliothèque pontificale*, pp. 4–8.

⁸ Jullien de Pommerol and Monfrin, *La Bibliothèque pontificale*, pp. 78–79.

Pietramala, and Nicolas of Clemanges, all of whom were associated with highly progressive cultural circles. Upon being elevated to the papacy, Benedict XIII reorganized the library, which acquired a strong humanistic character in the ten years or so in which Nicolas of Clemanges was papal secretary (1397–1408). While organizing the library of Benedict XIII, Nicolas of Clemanges subscribed to the standards set by Francesco Petrarch. In fact, Petrarchan norms guided his search for and attainment of rare and old manuscripts, the transcription of classical Latin works, and the acquisition of texts produced by the new culture. Thus the library acquired many works of Cicero (20 manuscripts), a good selection of ancient philosophers and rhetoricians (a lot of Seneca, 38 manuscripts; but also Aristotle), a sufficient collection of historians (above all Sallust and Livy), and a vast collection of Latin and Greek poets (above all Ovid and Homer's *Iliad* in Latin translation), a handful of grammarians in multiple copies (7 manuscripts of Priscian and 2 each of Martianus Capella and Servius), an excellent collection of scientific authors (among these the hard-to-find Hyginus and Frontinus), in addition to a series of rich miscellanies. But what distinguished the library above all and attested to the cultural criteria that guided its formation was the presence of twenty manuscripts with the works of Petrarch, five with those of Boccaccio, and one each with the works of Dante and Coluccio Salutati.

The presence of works by classical and modern authors also demonstrates the intimate collaboration that evolved between Benedict XIII and his secretary, a collaboration that led to the formation of a library exceptional for its age and for the overall unfavorable conditions it faced.⁹ This collection of books was made possible by the cultural sensibility of the pope, as clearly expressed in his will. In it, even while affirming his own orthodoxy, he attests to living in a cultural reality different from that of preceding times. He upholds the prominence of jurisprudence, but at the same time, he recognizes the importance of other disciplines; he underscores the value of Christian tradition, and he identifies the four stages of Christian catechesis: teaching, preaching, writing, and commenting:

Having acquired superficially during my youth a rudimentary knowledge of letters, I have been instructed, as much as was possible, given my paltry intellect, in the science of jurisprudence by Catholic teachers; neither the learning received from these teachers, nor the in-depth knowledge of disciplines unrelated to jurisprudence, nor the arrogance of recent discoveries, nor intellectual boldness have caused me to introduce new dogmas, especially

⁹ Ibid., pp. 80–87.

in the area of faith, or to speculate on unknown phantasms, being very occupied with jurisprudence. In later years as an adult in the schools and outside the schools... teaching, preaching, writing, and commenting as well as disputing, discussing, and debating, although in a coarse and unrefined fashion, I have always been considered a Catholic of Christian sentiments, and no one has ever heard a contrary opinion of me up to today: *usque ad moderna tempora*.¹⁰

The reference to modern times (*moderna tempora*) is used by Benedict XIII as a chronological referent rather than an allusion to a new age. In fact, his will demonstrates the relevance of teaching in the Christian world; it recalls the importance of oral teaching and of religious instruction through the diverse stages of teaching, preaching, writing, and exegesis in one's cultural formation; it attests to the correlation between papal culture and the papal libraries, and it explains why there was always a preponderance of works of theology and law in these libraries. These works were, of course, very valuable during a period of strong unrest, such as that of the Schism, but they were equally valuable in other periods in the life of the church.

Almost in the same years, Innocent VII (1404–1406), a pope who favored Rome as the seat of the papal court, was mindful of the importance of the court's relationship with men of letters. He thus tried to reorganize the Roman Curia and gather around him some of the best humanists of the period.¹¹ He organized a series of public competitions to determine which candidates would be qualified for the position of apostolic secretary. A winner of one of these contests was Leonardo Bruni who, having been named by the pope as the judge in one of the subsequent competitions, mocked the cultural ambiance in Rome and the Latin of some of the candidates and pointed out that the single most important criterion in determining

¹⁰ Cited in *ibid.*, p. 87: "Ego qui loquor...vix primis litterarum rudimentis in infantia superficialiter cognitis, inter catholicos preceptores juxta capacitatem rudis ingenii aliquantulum fui juris scientia informatus, ex quorum preceptorum doctrina vel exterarum artium exquisita noticia aut novarum inventionum arrogantia seu curiose presumptionis audacia nulla verisimiliter fuit occasio, maxime circa fidem, nova introducendi dogmata aut ignota fantasmata speculandi, utpote satis in juris scientia occupatus, qui post etatem proveciorem in scolis et extra, quamvis minus sufficienter, legendo, predicando, scrivendo et allegando, etiam disputando,... conferendo et altercando licet insufficienter et rude, semper tamen catholice fui reputatus in fide christiana sentire, nec contrarium de me usque ad moderna tempora auditum." Cfr. Sebastián Puyg y Puyg, *Episcopologio Barcinonense. Pedro de Luna, último papa de Aviñón...* (Barcelona, 1920), p. 537.

¹¹ Amedeo De Vincentiis, "Innocenzo VII," in *Enciclopedia dei Papi*, 2 (Rome, 2000), pp. 581–84; Massimo Miglio, *Materiali e ipotesi*, pp. 15–31; Germano Gualdo, "Umanesimo e segretari apostolici all'inizio del Quattrocento. Alcuni casi esemplari," in *Cancellaria e cultura nel Medio Evo*, ed. G. Gualdo (Vatican City, 1990), pp. 309–10.

the choice of an apostolic secretary should be his ability to imitate the ancients: “*vestigia auctoritatesque antiquorum.*”¹²

Moderna tempora. The Papal Library in Rome

It was to Leonardo Bruni himself that the pope entrusted the task of writing the bull for the reestablishment of the *Studium Urbis* and for the institution of a chair in Greek (1406). The bull, as formulated by Bruni, reaffirms the utility and dignity of humanistic studies, retraces the cultural tradition of Rome, recalls that both civil and canonical law were born in this city, and links learning to the knowledge of truth and Christian orthodoxy. Moreover, and this is the most important aspect of the bull, Innocent VII reintroduces knowledge of Greek in the humanistic canon of the Curia:

Since the study of literature and the knowledge of the arts, besides being of great and obvious use in both public and private spheres, offer prestige and dignity to those cities where they flourish, and they are linked to the peace and tranquility that we all fervently desire, we have decreed to bring back to Rome during our pontificate, with the help of God, these studies long discontinued, and sustain them with every effort possible, *so that man can know truth through learning* and obey God and the law.¹³

The real truth was that of the Catholic Church, which was mediated, according to a very ancient tradition, by a selective cultural process that adapted itself continuously to the most innovative intellectual forces. Unfortunately the pontificate of Innocent VII was too brief to have a significant influence on the cultural life of the Roman papal court, which was still constrained by the serious problems caused by the Schism and by a precarious municipal situation that forced the pope to flee Rome.

¹² Cited in Miglio, *Materiali e ipotesi*, pp. 19–20; cfr. Leonardo Bruni, *Epistolarum libri VIII*, ed. L. Mehus (Florence, 1741), pp. 24–25.

¹³ Cited in Miglio, *Materiali e ipotesi*, p. 19 n. 12, emphasis mine. “Cum itaque litterarum studia et bonarum artium doctrinae preter summam ac manifestissimam utilitatem quam privatim atque publice afferunt maximum ornamentum ac dignitatem illis civitatibus et locis in quibus ipsa vigent premere videantur, et cum pace et tranquillitate cuius nos esse cupidissimos profitemur maxime sint coniuncta, decrevimus deo autore huiusmodi studia, per longissima spatia hactenus intermissa in hoc tempore pontificatus nostri ad hanc Urbem reducere, et omni fomento ea rursus suscitare, ut homines per eruditionem, veritatem rerum agnoscant, et deo atque legibus parere adiscant...” The bull is edited in Gordon Griffiths, “Leonardo Bruni and the Restoration of the University of Rome (1406),” *Renaissance Quarterly* 26 (1973), 1–10.

The image of the court of this period projected by the very protagonists of this sudden and exceptional cultural revival (a humanist coterie of a sort) was colored too much by literary references, Virgilian and Petrarchan, to correspond to reality. This was so even though the humanists present at the papal court at this time (Leonardo Bruni, Francesco da Fiano, Antonio Loschi, Cencio Rustici, Pier Paolo Vergerio, and Bartolomeo da Montepulciano) enjoyed total prominence and were all in some way linked to the teaching of Petrarch. Indeed, they were all so well known that they need no identification. What this shows us is that, whether the pope resided in Avignon or in Rome, rigid categorizing about the nature of the papal court tells us little and institutions, economics and politics exercised less of an influence on the cultural rhythms of the court than did the *élites*, even though the latter consisted of relatively few people.

A New Humanistic Canon

Only a few decades after the papacy of Innocent VII, it was possible for Lapo da Castiglionchio the Younger to write a treatise, *De curiae commodis* (1438), in Rome where the memory of the Schism was still palpable, in which he argues that the Curia was superior to Athens; it was a new Academy that spread its teachings throughout the world.¹⁴ Following a rigid humanistic canon, Lapo excludes theologians, jurists, doctors, mathematicians and astronomers from his treatise, but he acknowledges some of the best humanists this new culture had to offer.

Cencio Rustici, Poggio Bracciolini, Biondo Flavio, Cristoforo Garatone, Giovanni Aurispa, Andrea Fiocchi, Rinuccio da Castiglione, Leon Battista Alberti, the humanists acknowledged by Lapo, introduced and articulated humanism's cultural trends within the papal court. They treated or fostered historical and philological research, antiquarianism, the theorizing regarding individual autonomy, knowledge of ancient texts both Greek and Latin, the importance of Greek literature, the acquisition of new textual traditions, the respect for the ancient remains, the cult of the classical world, and the need for private libraries. All of these scholarly practices and modes of thinking were imposed on the entire world by the humanists. They became

¹⁴ The text has been recently re-edited with an English translation and ample commentary by Christopher S. Celenza, *Renaissance Humanism and the Papal Curia. Lapo da Castiglionchio the Younger's De curiae commodis* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1999).

integral parts of the culture at large, eventually becoming the basis for a way of life.

Once again the culture of the papal court was being formulated in the curial offices, especially in the circles of the pontifical writers and the papal secretaries. Once again, as it had been in centuries past, the prose of these individuals, evidenced through the bulls and documents they compiled, came to be seen all over Europe as a model of literary style and often also of graphic style. Their works, which enjoyed special circulation, established the norms and the subject matter for the new humanistic culture. Moreover, the humanists of the court served as the focal points of a dense network of epistolary correspondences, above all in Italy, but also in France, Spain, England, Germany, and beyond. Their epistles spread outside the Curia the culture that was being formulated daily inside the papal court, with all its diversity and divergences, and at times with ideological contradictions.¹⁵

The papal secretaries were the fountain head of this huge wave of cultural diffusion that was spread throughout Europe. They were the most intimate collaborators of the pope, and it was their task to express the will of the pope in official documents by editing the drafts of the letters of the Curia. They assumed a particularly delicate role during the era of the Schism. They had to be bishops and notaries. They had to have a solid preparation in theology, law, history and literature. They had to know what was going on in the contemporary world. At times they were also entrusted with governmental missions within the papal state.¹⁶ The papal secretaries of Eugene IV (1431–1447), besides the above-mentioned Bracciolini, Biondo, Vegio, Aurispa, and Fiocchi, included also Niccolò Perotti, George of Trebizond, and Pier Candido Decembrio. During the pontificate of Nicholas V (1447–1455), Orazio Romano, Pietro da Noceto, Enea Silvio Piccolomini, Giovanni Tortelli, and Lorenzo Valla were named papal secretaries. Each revealed in his own work a different intellectual range and cultural slant, a different political and religious ideology, and a different historical and literary consciousness, but all of them had humanistic culture as their common denominator. Given this diversity among the humanists, we need to define at any one time the contents of humanism in order to avoid formulae that risk becoming useless generalizations. Even though a strong humanistic spirit characterized the papal court of Eugene IV, we cannot speak of a

¹⁵ Both aspects remain totally unexplored.

¹⁶ Much work still needs to be done on the papal secretaries, especially regarding their cultural role; useful suggestions and observations are found in Peter Partner, *The Pope's Men. The Papal Civil Service in the Renaissance* (Oxford, 1990).

curial humanism at that time as we can with regard to the second half of the Quattrocento.

The Humanist Popes

The second half of the Quattrocento saw the rise to the papal throne of cardinals who had been humanists in their own right; consequently, historians were able to evaluate these popes' pontificates through the prism of their own culture. This was especially true for Nicholas V (Tommaso Parentucelli),¹⁷ but also for Pius II (Enea Silvio Piccolomini).¹⁸ In the papal biographies written by the humanists by the middle of the Quattrocento, the cultural commitment of the pope acquires exceptional importance, substituting other traditional aspects of the pontiff.

In reading the biography of Tommaso Parentucelli and his *curriculum studiorum* and in comparing them with the biographies and *curricula* of other contemporary figures, even those in the Curia, one does not see a significant difference between them. Of course, one must be cognizant of the fact that here we are speaking of the cultural experiences of a small minority and that in the case of Parentucelli the sources were purposefully concordant. They reflect the overall wonder at a person who, in the space of a year, became first bishop, then cardinal and finally pope. Nonetheless, it is striking that for the first time, in the Quattrocento, a religious figure with an exceptionally multifaceted personality was elected pope and that he was admired by all because of his humanistic qualities.

Nicholas V was unquestionably a humanist, a student of the *humanae litterae*, but it is also true that, given our awareness of the cultural diversity of the Quattrocento, the term humanist is insufficient to define a cultured figure of that time and that it is equally evident that the culture of Parentucelli played an important role in the operation of his government. For example, his humanistic canon did not coincide with that outlined by Lapo da Castiglionchio the Younger in his *Dialogus de Curiae commodis* (1438). Whereas the latter excluded the practitioners of theology, medicine, mathematics, astronomy, music, civil and canon law from his *Dialogus*, Nicholas V, according to his biographers, embraced every one of these

¹⁷ Massimo Miglio, "Niccolò V," in *Enciclopedia dei papi*, 2 (Rome, 2000), pp. 644–58; idem, "La storiografia su Niccolò V," in *Papato, Stati regionali e Lunigiana nell'età di Niccolò V*, ed. Eliana M. Vecchi (La Spezia, 2004), pp. 21–32.

¹⁸ Marco Pellegrini, "Pio II," in *Enciclopedia dei papi*, 2 (Rome, 2000), pp. 663–85.

disciplines. Thus, Nicholas V applied humanistic philology even to the history of the papacy; he equated the writings of the Church Fathers with Latin and Greek classics; and he included patristic and scholastic texts, works of Greek and Arabic philosophy, mathematics, and more still in the *canone bibliografico* he composed for Cosimo dei Medici, concluding by privileging history: a library should include whatever pertains to history (“Et quicquid ad hystoriam pertinet arbitror apponendum.”)¹⁹

After the death of Nicholas V, there was an inventory of the manuscripts found in his *cubiculum* (bedroom). The inventory revealed many books of history, all of which dealt with ancient history. If, as historians commonly believe, the manuscripts in the *cubiculum* constituted the personal library of the pope, it is noteworthy that among the works the pope had read most frequently, and, as was his habit, had annotated and glossed until almost the last day of his life,²⁰ there were various copies of Livy, Suetonius, and Thucydides, Diodorus Siculus and Appian of Alexandria, the *Cosmography* of Ptolemy, Vegetius and Frontinus, Sallust and Valerius Maximus, Xenophon and Justin, together with the *Institutio oratoria* of Quintilian, the *Opera* of Virgil, many texts of Cicero, and works of Statius and Claudianus, Seneca and Aulus Gellius, Macrobius and Lactantius, Silius Italicus and Terence, Apuleius and Horace, and Homer and Columella. Interestingly enough, among the works connected to the history of the church, there was only a translation of Eusebius’ *De preparatione evangelica* and the *Divinae institutiones* of Lactantius.²¹

The biographers of Nicholas V convey the image of a humanist pope endowed with exceptional oratorical skills, a protector of the humanists, a scrupulous researcher of manuscripts, a theologian, the restorer of the papal library, and a rebuildler of the city of Rome. This last attribute was a time-honored motif, present already in the *Liber pontificalis*. Thus in his funeral oration for Nicholas V, Cardinal Jean Jouffroy gives the image of a pontiff on his death bed with books under his pillow, evoking yet another classical motif that, not long after, would appear in Roman commemorative

¹⁹ Maria Grazia Blasio, Cinzia Lejl, and Giuseppina Roselli, “Un contributo alla lettura del canone bibliografico di Tommaso Parentucelli,” in *Le chiavi della memoria. Miscellanea in occasione del I centenario della Scuola Vaticana di Paleografia Diplomatica e Archivistica*, ed. Association of Ex-Students (Vatican City, 1984), pp. 125–65 at 155.

²⁰ Massimiliano Albanese, *Gli storici classici nella biblioteca latina di Niccolò V* (Rome, 2003).

²¹ Antonio Manfredi, *I codici latini di Niccolò V. Edizione degli inventari e identificazione dei manoscritti* (Vatican City, 1994), pp. 505–14; see also Laura Onofri, “Sacralità, immaginazione e proposte politiche. La vita di Niccolò V di Giannozzo Manetti,” *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 28 (1979), 45–47.

statuary. Indeed, he was surrounded by books, like a second Apollo, as persuasive as Orpheus, more versatile than Mercury, more munificent than Ptolemy. He had made philosophy, history and the Church Fathers common knowledge to all.²² As if to compensate for the loss brought about by the traumatizing fall of Constantinople to the Turks, he assembled a complete collection of works on Greek culture, all of them in the Greek language. In much the same vein, Giannozzo Manetti asserts that the last five years of the pontificate of Nicholas V were characterized by intense cultural progress, the like of which had not been seen since Carolingian times. Manetti describes painstakingly Nicholas' commitment to the library. He considers the work carried out by the copyists, the texts researched, the new works written at the suggestion of Nicholas, and the translations into Latin of the Greek works of the Church Fathers that had hitherto not been translated.²³ In later years, Nicholas V's friend Vespasiano da Bisticci, using the biography of Manetti and enriching it with personal remembrances, wrote the most detailed account of Nicholas' dedication and contribution to the papal library. To convey effectively the greatness of Parentucelli and his predilection for John Chrysostom, he cited St. Thomas.²⁴ Michele Canensi, like other biographers, underscored Nicholas' negotiations with the Greeks at the Council of Florence, but he also alluded to the pope's commitment to the search for manuscripts and to his having them transcribed as well as to his having subsidized men of culture, among whom he acknowledged Giovanni Tortelli, Gaspare da Verona and Maffeo Vegio. Above all, however, he emphasized his eloquence (*rerum caelestium iocundissima sermocinatio*), which he considered to be Nicholas V's trademark.²⁵

Nicholas' commitment to the reconstruction of the library was extraordinary and closely connected to his cultural interests. Using the enormous revenues of the Jubilee of 1450, he hired translators to render Greek works

²² "...qui peculiarium librorum supra sexcenta volumina per orbem colligen in lucem retulit, qui Aristotelis, Platonis, Theofrasti, Ptholomei philosophiam, qui Tuthididis, Herodoti, Appiani, Diodori Siculi, Pollibii certe illustres sed prius incognitas nobis historias fecit esse communes; hic Crisostomi, Basili, Nazanseni, Eusebii manna celeste, ut Jeronimus loquitur, nobis advexit." Cited in Laura Onofri, "'Sicut fremitus leonis ita et regis ira.' Temi neoplatonici e culto solare nell'orazione funebre per Nicolò V di Jean Jouffroy," *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 32 (1982), 1–28 at 25–26; see also for corrections and integration of the text, Hermann Goldbrunner, "'Quemcumque elegerit Dominus, ipse sanctus erit.' Zur Leichenrede des Jean Jouffroy auf Nikolaus V," *Quellen und Forschungen aus Italienischen Bibliotheken und Archiven* 64 (1984), 385–96.

²³ Giannozzo Manetti, *De vita ac gestis Nicolai quinti summi pontificis*, ed. and trans. Anna Modigliani (Rome, 2005), pp. 55–67.

²⁴ Vespasiano da Bisticci, *Le Vite*, ed. Aulo Greco, 2 vols. (Florence, 1970–1976), 1:65–69.

²⁵ Massimo Miglio, *Storiografia pontificia del Quattrocento* (Bologna, 1975), p. 219.

into Latin, he got humanists to provide effective editions of classical texts, and he had manuscripts bought and transcribed. The Greek translators included Giovanni Tortelli, Giovanni Aurispa, Francesco Filelfo, Giorgio of Trebizond, Gregorio and Lilio Tifernate, Guarino veronese, Lampugnino Biraghi, Niccolò Perotti, Pier Candido Decembrio, Poggio Bracciolini, Rinuccio Aretino, Theodore Gaza and Lorenzo Valla. Nicholas put Giovanni Tortelli in charge of this enterprise, and in a few years, especially after the Jubilee, the pope had gathered 1200 Greek and Latin manuscripts, some of exceptional importance, that encompassed all sectors of humanistic culture.²⁶ But, if we were to compare the Avignon library of Benedict XIII with its exceptional holdings of twenty manuscripts of Francesco Petrarca with that of Nicholas V, we would note that Nicholas' had only four manuscripts of Petrarca, which contained, significantly enough, the *De gestis Cesaris*, the *De remediis utriusque fortune* in 2 copies, the *Invectivae contra medicum*, the *De sui ipsius et multorum ignorantia*, the *Contra invidios*, the *Invectivae contra quondam magni status hominem* in a single volume, dated 1405.²⁷

Although the formal opening of the library to the public did not take place until the papacy of Sixtus IV in 1475 with his bull *Ad decorem* and with the institutionalization of book-lending implemented by Bartolomeo Platina,²⁸ the motives that led to such a public opening are already noticeable in Nicholas' over-all scheme of the papal library. In fact, as we learn from a brief addressed to Enoch d'Ascoli (edited by Poggio Bracciolini), Nicholas aimed at a wide diffusion of knowledge:

We decreed a long time ago, and we do this with great care for the common good of all scholars, so that we can have a papal library of Latin and Greek manuscripts, equal to the dignity of the pope and the Apostolic See, and already, among the texts that have been found, we are beginning to have a majority of the writers of each genre.²⁹

²⁶ Massimo Miglio, "Niccolò V umanista di Cristo," in *Umanesimo e Padri della Chiesa. Manoscritti e incunabili di testi patristici da Francesco Petrarca al primo Cinquecento*, ed. Sebastiano Gentile (Rome, 1997), pp. 77–84; Concetta Bianca, "Il pontificato di Niccolò V e i Padri della Chiesa," in *ibid.*, pp. 85–92; Giuseppe Lombardi, "Libri e istituzioni a Roma: diffusione e organizzazione," *Roma del Rinascimento*, ed. Antonio Pinelli (Rome, 2001), repr. in Lombardi, *Saggi*, pp. 367–69.

²⁷ Manfredi, *I codici, ad indicem: Petrarca Franciscus*.

²⁸ Platina was also a librarian and a papal biographer to whom we owe the humanistic rewriting of the *Liber pontificalis* in his *Liber de vita Christi ac omnium pontificum*. On this see, Josè Ruyschaert, "Sixte IV, fondateur de la bibliothèque Vaticane, 15 juin 1475," *Archivum historiae pontificiae* 7 (1969), 513–24; see also Luciano Gargan, "Gli umanisti e la biblioteca pubblica," in *Le biblioteche nel mondo antico e medievale*, ed. Guglielmo Cavallo (Rome, 2004⁷), pp. 163–86.

²⁹ Cited in Eugene Müntz and Paul Fabre, *La Bibliothèque du Vatican au XV^e siècle d'après*

Dissemination of knowledge was, of course, a characteristic of humanism. However, the desire for the dissemination of knowledge had been evident in preceding centuries during the best periods of the papal library.

Once more, then, innovation was linked to a longstanding tradition. As the papal librarian, Giovanni Andrea Bussi, notes in the preface (a preface dedicated to Paul II) in the first volume with which he began his collaboration with the Roman proto-printers:

We know that the Church of Rome, adhering to ancient custom, has always been preoccupied with finding books, it has gathered and preserved them, entrusting them to librarians (especially the sacred texts, the most useful to know because they contain divine knowledge) so that they could be consulted for every need . . . and the most illustrious popes always dedicated their attention to gathering books from everywhere, above all books treating the Catholic tradition, in order to embellish their residences.³⁰

Nicholas V's brief to Enoch and perhaps some of Bussi's ideas are echoed in the bull of Sixtus IV, which concluded the long, medieval history of the papal library, a library whose goal had always been utility (*utilitas*) and convenience (*commudum*), even though in the Middle Ages "utility" and "convenience" did not have the same meaning they acquired during the humanistic era. Sixtus IV's bull states:

For the dignity of the militant Church, for the growth of the Catholic faith, for the utility and honor of the scholars and literati, the Roman pontiff, fervent supporter of the liberal arts, in order to induce men of culture to acquire with greater ease the highest level of the human condition and so that, having acquired it, they can spread it among others, motivates them with paternal exhortations, attracts them with gifts, helps them with benefits, prepares the

des documents inédits: contributions pour servir à l'histoire de l'humanisme (Paris, 1887), pp. 47–48: "Iamdiu decrevimus atque ad id omni studio operam damus ut pro communi doctorum virorum comodo habeamus librorum omnium tum latinorum tum graecorum bibliothecam concedentem pontificis et sedis apostolice dignitati, et tam ex iis qui reperiuntur omnis generis scriptorum maiorem partem habemus."

³⁰ Giovanni Andrea Bussi, *Prefazioni alle edizioni di Sweynheym e Pannartz prototipografi romani*, ed. M. Miglio (Milan, 1978), p. 3: "Sacrosantam Romanam Ecclesiam, cuius omnipotens Deus ad temporum nostrorum felicitatem tibi, pater beatissime Paule secundum pontificum misericordissime, sancta dedit gubernacula, hanc habuisse consuetudinem a Patribus accepimus, ut preciosissimam librorum supellectilem diligenter semper exquireret, diligentius vero congregatam, cura Bibliotecario iniuncta conservaret; sacrorum praesertim voluminum, in quibus ut divini sapientia ita cognitu utilior continetur ut, si quando necessitas exegisset, ex sacris archivis deprompta volumina spectarentur . . . Quicumque in Ecclesia Dei maxime floruerunt impenso studio semper id egerunt ut coacervatis undique catholicis precipue voluminibus, sedes suas exornarent."

libraries and appropriate venues, and gathers the scattered volumes in one place for their advantage....³¹

The Roman Printing Press

Between the pontificate of Nicholas V and that of Sixtus IV, a cultural event of great importance occurred, which had notable consequences for the cultural life of the papal court. In 1467 a printing press was established in Rome. Typographers, who up until then had worked in Subiaco (a small town east of Rome), moved their presses to the Eternal City. Complex cultural and economic reasons led to their moving from Subiaco to Rome, namely the availability of libraries that were better stocked and more diverse than those in Subiaco from which to draw works to be printed, the ease in finding editors, and the direct proximity to a larger market. Moreover, in the personnel of the Roman Curia, starting with the editors of their books, they found much good will and philological expertise. At the Roman Curia they also found German clerics with a high enough level of professionalism to transform the printing business into a viable economic enterprise. The typographers created, together with the editors, a type of book that was new but at the same time old, very old, which would quickly become a model for much of Europe.³²

The introduction of the printing press in Rome happened at a time in which the city, that is to say, in this case, the papal court, having reacquired full cultural and political authority, became a point of reference for all of Western Christendom. This happened for a relatively brief period of time, but it coincided with the most intense years of the Roman publishing industry. The Roman press of the Quattrocento was as diversified as curial humanism was multifarious. The press involved many people who were associated with the papal court: typographers, humanists, academics, princes and lords, members of religious orders and confraternities,

³¹ Ruyschaert, *Sixte IV*, p. 523: "Ad decorem militantis Ecclesie, fidei catholice augmentum, eruditorum quoque ac litterarum studiis insistentium virorum commodum et honorem Romanus Pontifex, commendabilis eiusque exercitii liberalis adiutor, ut sectatores liberalium artium eo facilius ad tam precelsum humane conditionis fastigium acquirendum, acquisitum vero in alios diffundendum inducat, paternis eo hortatur monitis, muneribus allicit, beneficiis iuvat, bibliothecas et loca eis accomodata preparat et sparsa librorum volumina ad ipsorum profectum in unum reducit, prout in Domino conspicit salubriter expedire."

³² Massimo Miglio and Orietta Rossini, eds. *Gutenberg e Roma. Le origini della stampa nella città dei papi (1467-1477)* (Naples, 1997).

merchants and jurists. Even in the Roman publishing industry, innovation and tradition co-existed. In fact, the Roman press revealed an emphasis on the revival of the culture of antiquity as well as a need for the recovery and re-appropriation of medieval traditions. The emphasis on the revival of antiquity and the reconsideration of medieval traditions coupled with issues raised by curial humanism, which was by now fully developed, gave rise to the awareness of living in a diverse age and in a new society. Indeed, the conceptualization of the Middle Ages, the *media tempestas* (the term was coined by Giovanni Andrea Bussi who was papal librarian and was the one who edited a large part of the editions of the Roman proto-typographers), took place in Rome in those same years and found in the Roman press its formalization and the vehicle for its diffusion.³³ The acknowledgement of the Middle Ages marks the final moment of a cultural evolution that had brought to the forefront a conscious awareness of something new (the *moderna tempora* vs. the *media tempestas*). However, the recognition of the new did not result in the abandonment of the old.

³³ Giovanni Andrea Bussi, *Prefazioni*, p. 17 and see also pp. xxiii–xxv.

HUMANISM AND THE MEDIEVAL ENCYCLOPEDIAIC TRADITION

Giuseppe Mazzotta

The role encyclopedias have played in the shaping of humanism has not been much studied, if it has been studied at all. The reasons for this neglect may be attributed to some common misperceptions scholars hold about this peculiar, hybrid literary-philosophical genre. “Encyclopedia” is a term, as is known, of Greek origin (*encyklios paideia*), and it is a genre that received a wide diffusion in Roman time (through Vitruvius and Pliny). Encyclopedias flourished in the Middle Ages in the wake of the seventh century *Etymologies* of Isidore of Seville and are viewed as typically medieval forms of representation. The finality of these structures of the unity of all knowledge is identifiable in the pursuit of the classification and ordering of the arts and sciences and the criteria that make possible this totalizing project.

From Isidore’s alphabet of knowledge, which aimed at providing the conspectus of all arts and sciences, stemmed the broad phenomenon of medieval encyclopedias all over Europe. One can mention the ninth-century *De universo* by Rabanus Maurus; the twelfth-century *Imago mundi* by Honorius of Autun; the 1225 *De rerum proprietatibus* by the Franciscan friar, Bartolomeus Anglicus, and starting in 1245 the *Speculum quadruplex* by the Dominican Vincent of Beauvais. These major encyclopedic compilations—and I spare the reader the long list of what Pierre Michaud-Quantin has called the “petites encyclopedias”—catalogues and dictionaries (that include Hugutius of Pisa’s *Magnae derivationes* and Brunetto Latini’s *Tresor*)—antedate the establishment of universities (though eventually they became tools of education parallel to the universities) and circulate widely all over Europe.¹

A symptom of how common and even how vulgar ends up being the phenomenon of encyclopedism can be found in the searing attack Petrarch

¹ For a general view see Maria Teresa Beonio-Brocchieri Fumagalli, *Le enciclopedie dell'occidente medievale* (Turin, 1981). See also Pierre Michaud-Quantin, *Études sur le vocabulaire philosophique du Moyen Âge* (Rome, 1971). Cf. Giuseppe Mazzotta, *Dante's Vision and the Circle of Knowledge* (Princeton, 1993).

unleashes in his tract, *On His Own Ignorance and that of Many Others*, signed off from Padua on January 13, 1368. To the four, young neo-Aristotelians or Averroists who have accused the poet of lacking a rigorous knowledge of modern philosophy, Petrarch opposes a view of knowledge rooted in the depths of living and woven with the texture of experience. In a Socratic twist he gives his argument, Petrarch maintains that true knowledge coincides with its opposite, ignorance. His skepticism about worldly knowledge or his “learned ignorance” ushers in faith’s vision and the conviction that ethics ought to be the paramount concern of life. The perspective of ethics forces Petrarch to reflect on the will and its weakness. From this standpoint, Petrarch caricatures the abstract architectonics of knowledge that mindlessly seek to assemble what amounts to trivial and empty descriptions of the natural world.

Of the four scholars who have questioned his abilities, he draws a dismissive, satirical portrait:

However, the first of them has no learning at all—I tell you only what you know—the second knows a little; the third not much; the fourth—I must admit—not a little but in such a confused and undisciplined order and as Cicero says, “with so much frivolity and vain boasting that it would perhaps be better to know nothing.” For letters are instruments of insanity for many, of arrogance for almost everyone, if they do not meet with a good and well-trained mind. Therefore, he has much to tell about wild animals, about birds and fishes: how many hairs there are in the lions mane; how many feathers in the hawks tail; with how many arms the cuttlefish clasps a shipwrecked man; that elephants couple from behind and are pregnant for two years; that this docile and vigorous animal, the nearest to man by its intelligence, lives until the end of the second or third century of its life; that the phoenix is consumed by aromatic fire and revives after it has been burned; that the sea urchin stops a ship, however fast she is driving along, while it is unable to do anything once it is dragged out of the waves; how the hunter fools the tiger with a mirror; how the Arimasp attacks the griffin with his sword; how whales turn over on their backs and thus deceive the sailors; that the newborn of the bear has as yet no shape; that the mule rarely gives birth, the viper only once and then to its own disaster; that moles are blind and bees deaf; that alone among all living beings the crocodile moves its upper jaw.²

The overt satire, clearly enough, encompasses the chaotic, “undisciplined” catalogue of several legends, fossils of lore, commonplace observations of natural phenomena as well as the principle of order that subtends all

² *On his Own Ignorance and that of Many Others*, in *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, eds. and trans. Ernest Cassirer, Paul Kristeller, and John Herman Randall, Jr. (Chicago, 1969), pp. 56–57.

tabulations of knowledge. What is more, in his attack against encyclopedism, Petrarch is echoing a specific and recognizable encyclopedia, the *Speculum naturale*, which is the first part (in the series of four *Specula*) by the neo-Aristotelian Vincent of Beauvais, who in turn draws from *De natura rerum* of Thomas of Cantimprè and Bartholomaeus Anglicus' *De proprietatibus rerum*.

There can be little doubt that in writing this text in Padua against neo-Aristotelian and Averroist young men and addressing it to the grammarian Donato degli Albanzani, Petrarch deliberately alludes to and dismisses as vain knowledge the work of Vincent and his kindred spirits in the fraternal orders. One reason for the dismissal may be the fact that Vincent seeks to revive and usher in a new phase in the history of the encyclopedia.

Vincent finds misleading and unacceptable Isidore's *Etymologies*, which are organized by the grammatical principle of a presumed correspondence between language and reality. The intellectual structure of his encyclopedia hinges on the claim that etymologies constitute the foundation and gateway to the knowledge of the world of reality. Five centuries later, Vincent of Beauvais opens up and overhauls what is perceived as the traditional form elaborated by Isidore, because it had become an anachronistic, static, and fossilized model. Under the impact of the discovery of Aristotle and of the university debates that developed around his work, Vincent's *Speculum quadruplex* makes room for the new knowledge made available by the near-contemporary Arab sciences (medicine, above all) as well as for the doctrines put forth by his Dominican teacher and colleague Thomas Aquinas.

Nonetheless, the mockery of these scholastic, fanciful and ultimately irrelevant encyclopedic constructions did not keep Petrarch from compiling, earlier on in his career, an encyclopedic text, *Rerum memorabilia libri* (no more than it will keep Boccaccio from composing both *De montibus* and the *Genealogia deorum gentilium*). Furthermore, the very title of his work, *De ignorantia*, echoes the phrase *docta ignorantia*, 'learned ignorance,' from the *Breviloquium* (V.6) by St. Bonaventure, in which he speaks of learned ignorance as the state wherein the spirit is swept into divine ecstasy. Petrarch does not deploy such a language of mystical darkness. Nonetheless, by his attacks against the Scholastic scientific traditions (that involve logicians as well as physicians) he wants to preserve the specific Augustinian-humanistic cultural thrust available in the formulations of Cicero, Isidore's version of the encyclopedia, and the Christian Fathers.

These strands are woven together in the *De doctrina Christiana*, which articulates St. Augustine's educational plan. In it, all vernacular knowledge

is arranged as an aid to the knowledge of scripture (II.xxxix). Thus, the arts, and in general, classical pagan culture (which for St. Augustine embrace magic, divinations, theater, painting, medicine, science, eloquence, music, etc.) must be marshaled to allow the understanding of the Bible. St. Augustine's views, are more nuanced in *De ordine*, where the arts of theater, eloquence, and magic fictions are expelled from the boundaries of legitimate knowledge. Yet, he vindicates the value of history, natural science, numbers, and the arts of reasoning.

In *On His Ignorance* Petrarch follows Augustine in equating true wisdom with religious faith. And to the very end, as one evinces from the letter he sent in 1373 to Benvenuto da Imola (*Seniles* XV.11), he claims for poetry, over and against St. Augustine, a privileged place in the scheme of knowledge. Benvenuto had asked an ancient question: what is the relation between poetry and philosophy and whether or not poetry could be counted among the seven liberal arts. For Petrarch, poetry (which, like history, is traditionally classified within the purview of grammar) is the noblest of them all:

... you justifiably inquire whether this art [poetry] ... is one of the liberal arts. I say that it has hardly been counted among the liberal arts, but is beyond all the liberal arts and takes them all in; ... Do not be troubled because it is not listed among the liberal arts, among which we know that neither theology nor philosophy is included; it is a great thing to be included among the greats but sometimes it is a greater thing to be left out ... the liberal arts begin the experience of knowledge in the human mind; the other unnamed ones among them finish and adorn what has been begun.³

Boethius, so does Petrarch argue by picking up the scene from *De consolatione philosophiae* both he and Boccaccio repeatedly probe (*Genealogy of the Gentile Gods*, XIV.20) makes moral poetry, not the meretricious muses, the worthy interlocutor of philosophy.

We have identified an apparent contradiction in Petrarch's thought: on the one hand, he dismisses Vincent of Beauvais's encyclopedism; on the other hand, he vindicates poetry's morality as well as its all-encompassing powers, as if poetry's imaginative, indeed encyclopedic inclusiveness could replace the scientific claims at totalization of the conventional *specula*. Through this posture one can hear the echoes of vibrant debates that occurred from roughly the 1260s to 1320 in the theological circles of Dominicans and Franciscans. These debates sought primarily to either

³ Francis Petrarch, *Letters of Old Age I–XVIII*, trans. Aldo S. Bernardo, Saul Levin, and Rita A. Bernardo, 2 vols. (Baltimore, 1992), 2:588.

uphold the traditional ordering or to define a new configuration of the arts and sciences—or generally philosophy—in relation to theology. Let me briefly sketch the terms of these debates.

The authoritative statement of the Dominican position is articulated by Aquinas. In a text such as *Commentary on Boethius's De Trinitate* he theorizes the importance of the liberal arts, and especially the *trivium* (which he had studied at Monte Cassino) as preparatory to the study of philosophy. On the other hand, in his *Summa* he values the “natural light” of man’s intellect as the ground of knowledge. And he raises science, or what he calls *scientia* (in the sense of holding a complete and certain knowledge of an entity or of the truth of a proposition) to the level of a paradigm for rational knowledge. Such a principle about the importance of science allows him to forge a new rank-ordering of all forms of knowledge as well as between philosophy and theology. In his hierarchy, science, which is the other name for philosophy, need not be Christian. From this standpoint, Aquinas manages to claim both the autonomy of philosophy as well as its limits: it may show the way toward but it does not in itself lead to beatitude (*Summa theologiae*, II. II ae, r.10 ad. 3).

In this hierarchy of disciplines poetry is defined by St. Thomas Aquinas as *infima doctrina* because it is a human invention and because it belongs primarily to the order of making and not to the order of knowing. Or, as he puts it at the very outset of his *Summa theologiae* (I.1.9 ad 1): “Poetry employs metaphors for the sake of representation, in which we are born to take delight.” His point can be best grasped in the light of the neo-platonic notion that the goodness of an entity can be determined in so far as it participates in the higher order of being (*Commentary on Boethius' De Trinitate*).

Historians of medieval philosophy know only too well how intense and close was the intellectual dialogue joining together Aquinas and Bonaventure ever since their days as colleagues at the University of Paris. Nonetheless, the differences between them cannot be minimized, and one such difference concerns the place and value of the arts in the order of studies. In 1273 Bonaventure writes a text, *De reductione artium ad theologiam* that both opposes Aquinas’s views and seeks to re-found or re-legitimize the encyclopedic tradition. *Reductio* for Bonaventure means the way back, and, in this sense, the arts—a term to be taken in the widest sense of the mechanical and liberal arts—trace the journey of the mind back to the “source” of all wisdom. Thus understood, the encyclopedia no longer defines the archive of existing knowledge. Rather, it turns into a tool of investigation after the footprints of wisdom on the plain of experience.

At the heart of Bonaventure's short text, as a matter of fact, there stands the belief that all arts and sciences, as well as theology, imply each other and that each of them communicates with the other. Together, they all sparkle in the light of each other and make up a unitive knowledge wherein—and here lies the essence of Bonaventure's Franciscan vision of the *coincidentia oppositorum*—the minimal contains the maximum and viceversa.

More specifically, *De reductione artium ad theologiam* unfolds as an explanation of the ladder of lights. Its point of departure is the *given* of experience: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the God of lights."⁴ Starting from this quotation "borrowed" from the first chapter of the Epistle of James, Bonaventure proceeds to probe the fourteen reflections of this light: an exterior light or the light of the mechanical arts; an "inferior light" or the light of sense perception; an "interior light" or the light of philosophical knowledge, and a "superior light" of the Scripture. In this vision, works of art, rational philosophy, and natural philosophy lead back to divine wisdom.

The first light of the mechanical arts—that is servile and of lower nature than philosophical knowledge—is divided into the seven mechanical arts listed by Hugh of St. Victor in his *Didascalicon*: namely, weaving, armor-making, agriculture, hunting, navigation, medicine, and the dramatic art. For Bonaventure, these arts are self-sufficient. They are intended either for our consolation or for our comfort. Their purpose is to banish either sorrow or need; and they are useful or enjoyable. Bonaventure ends by citing the words of Horace: "Poets desire either to be useful or to please." Further, Bonaventure ponders the relationship between the mechanical arts and theology (paragraphs 11–14). He states that "divine wisdom" may be found in the illumination of the mechanical arts just as it is found in the illumination of rational philosophy and natural philosophy.

In effect, Bonaventure's views can be grasped by reflecting on the image of the ladder of knowledge, behind which one can recognize both philosophy's ladder in Plato's *Symposium* as well as Jacob's ladder in Genesis. The implications of the image bear greatly on Bonaventure's radical argument. Every rung in the ladder of knowledge turns out to be a threshold and not a static place in the ascent of the mind. More than that, in a ladder the lowest rung is just as important, if not more important than the higher one: you cannot climb to the higher rung without first stepping on the lowest. Finally, in this theory of art, which Bonaventure defines in terms

⁴ *On the Reduction of the Arts to Theology in Works of Saint Bonaventure*, trans. and intro. Zachary Hayes (St. Bonaventure, NY, 1996), p. 37.

of beauty, usefulness, and endurance, art is legitimized by the fact that the human artist strives to resemble the creativity of the Divine Maker. Or, to say it differently, it is legitimized by the principle that creation is itself an esthetic construction. For Bonaventure, who both asserts the hierarchy of the various forms of knowledge and also deliberately undercuts it, the highest wisdom appears already visible in the lowest and most servile or adulterated of the arts.

These theological-esthetic debates, which spawned within Dominican and Franciscan schools, shape the articulation of Petrarch's *On His Own Ignorance* with its skepticism about the value of the models of abstract knowledge, the practice of education as a journey through the stages (which for him are real geographical places) of the liberal arts, and the claims made for theology. As I would like to suggest in the following pages, they also figure in the earlier definition of humanism that takes place in the very city where Petrarch unleashes his polemic against encyclopedic knowledge, Padua. The work of an earlier representative of Paduan intellectual life, Albertino Mussato (1261–1329), embodies and stems from these debates. In many ways, as has been widely acknowledged by scholars, such as Manlio Dazzi, Giorgio Ronconi, Guido Billanovich, G. Saitta, and Ronald Witt, Albertino's artistic productions refract the political realities of his city as well as the intellectual concerns of the city's university.⁵

Founded in 1222 in the wake of a schism from the University of Bologna, the University of Padua, from the middle of the XIII century, acquired fame as a center for the study of the natural sciences—medicine and physics—although as early as 1226 Boncompagno taught his *antiqua rhetorica* there, after having taught it in Bologna in 1215. The constellation of scholars operating in Padua over these years captures the vitality of the institution. We know of Cino da Pistoia's tenure. Before Dino del Garbo's stint (from 1307 to 1327), the Averroist Pietro d'Abano (1250–1315) taught astrology, questions of double truth and free will, medicine, and, as he says, *de naturalibus naturaliter*. In Padua, moreover, lived Mussato's friend, Marsilius of Padua, the political theorist who, before becoming Rector at the University of Paris in 1313, taught natural philosophy and ended up in exile alongside

⁵ Manlio Dazzi, *Il Mussato preumanista (1261–1329). L'ambiente e l'opera* (Vicenza, 1964); Giorgio Ronconi, *Le origini delle dispute umanistiche sulla poesia (Mussato e Petrarca)* (Rome, 1976); see, above all, the arguments put forth by Ronald Witt, *'In the Footsteps of the Ancients': The Origins of Humanism from Lovato to Bruni* (Leiden, 2000). One wishes one could find in Witt's investigations the awareness of the fact that the liberal arts are traditionally treated within an encyclopedic context: there is evidence of a strong study of logic, for instance, in the study of jurisprudence, and of rhetoric in the study of theology.

Jean de Jandun and William Ockham. Eventually, Paulus Venetus, Pierpaolo Vergerio, and Vittorino da Feltre gave this university its international appeal with their educational ideas about history and poetry. The study of the sciences took an original turn. The point is that, like the so-called Averroists, the Franciscan nominalists called for an investigation of the natural world, in the belief that nature was the bedrock of reality and that all knowledge entailed the study of empirical, singular experiences.

There is one letter by Albertino Mussato I would like to discuss: *Epistle XVIII*, which he wrote to Fra Giovannino da Mantova in 1316 and which, as Eugenio Garin has shown, shapes the later clash between Salutati and Dominici.⁶ Mussato's letter, addressed as it is to a Dominican friar, can be called, and it has been called, a "defense of poetry."⁷ It is a defense carried out by the affirmation of the privileged status of poetry as an activity analogous to theology. It upholds the view of the *poeta theologus*. Such a theory was available in St. Augustine's *City of God* (XVIII.14), although Augustine dismisses outright any implied notion of identity between poetry and theology as a sheer pagan confusion between the orders of grace and nature. He explains that the poets-theologians were so called because they made "...hymns about the gods" and, even if they believed in the one true God, by worshipping him along with others who are not gods, they—Orpheus, Linus, and Musaeus—ended up dishonoring them all by their fables.

Understandably, Albertino Mussato, himself the *poeta theologus*, does not agree with the contempt heaped on fables by St. Augustine. For Mussato, *poesis* was *altera theologia*. The background to this claim and to the polemical letter to Fra Giovannino helps us fathom the import of Mussato's position. On the first anniversary of Mussato's poetic coronation, the Dominican friar delivered a sermon with an eye turned both to the natural philosophers and to the artists. Specifically, from his rationalist standpoint he objected to the belief in poetry's divine origin. And, from the perspective of his conviction about theology's superiority to all forms of knowledge, he rejected the claims staked by the sciences. In the wake of Aquinas, he viewed poetry as a form of human making or invention that deploys metaphorical language with the sole aim of providing pleasure. Predictably, Mussato dismisses Fra Giovannino's statements as a misunderstanding of Aquinas' intent.

⁶ Eugenio Garin, "Note e notizie," *Giornale critico della filosofia italiana* 40 (1961), 265.

⁷ I am quoting from A. Mussato, *Ecérinide, Epîtres métriques sur la poésie, Sonje*, trans. and ed. Jean-Frederic Chevalier (Paris, 2000).

Mussato's *Epistle* vindicates both poetry's sacred origins and the poets' divine inspiration. Quoting from Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies*, he accepts the theory of the *vates*. Poets, such as Homer and Virgil acknowledged the "creator of all things" and did so through their symbolic figurations of nature. Quoting Horace and Boethius, he maintains that poetry provides both delight and utility. He stresses the endurance and beauty of poetry. Furthermore, in a subtle move and, plainly, against Fra Giovannino's arguments, Mussato aligns poetry both with theology and with the sciences' pursuit of knowledge. By absorbing Aquinas's own insight into the metaphoricity of the Bible, Mussato insists that poetry uses metaphors just as the Bible does. As far as the sciences go, poetry "...is now Ethics, now Physics, now true Science." Finally, Mussato views poetry as constitutive of the encyclopedic ordering of knowledge: he emphasizes the point that the insights by Virgil, Homer, and Ennius elicited the agreement of "philosophers, jurists, artists, and the investigations of the secrets of nature." He singles out Boethius' mixture of poetry, philosophy, and theology as the example of an art in which all the muses are united in song.

In restating poetry's kinship with all the arts and sciences, Mussato undoes the Dominican hierarchical arrangement of the arts. Although he never raises the issue of poetry as an art or an invention explicitly, as Bonaventure had done, he echoes Bonaventure's specific casting of the arts. We recall that for Bonaventure every art, even a servile art, or any form of secular knowledge enjoys an ambivalent status: it is invested with the attribute of autonomy and, at the same time, it leads to all the other sciences.

This is certainly not a way of labeling all of Mussato's thought as a mere variety of Franciscan humanism or naturalism. Yet, Bonaventure's central idea about the material creation as God's esthetic production (as exemplified by the story of Genesis), and the exaltation of its beauty, endurance, and usefulness re-appear in *Epistle XVIII*. Bonaventure's influence is faintly recognizable also when Mussato casts poetry as the language of origins and the means by which man's likeness to God can be restored. And, in a way that goes beyond Bonaventure, in extolling poetry's freedom and powers of harmonizing both theology and the sciences, Mussato implies that human beings are capable of attaining knowledge of God through the natural operations of reason. In short, the origins of humanism cannot be defined exclusively in rhetorical terms. Humanism's intellectual foundations reach deep into the rich and vital theological soil of the thirteenth-century fraternal life.

In a way, Albertino Mussato took seriously the poetic coronation his city had conferred on him. Padua had ratified his institutional civic role as a

poet and an historian. In his turn, the poet sought to find an institutional “place” for poetry. The harmonization of the heterogeneous disciplines Mussato argued for sprang directly from the medieval encyclopedic project. He understood this project, and here lies the novelty of his work, as a model for the ordering of institutions (the interests in the city-square, university, and the cloister/convent) within the political economy of the city. His intimations about the Word that creates the world and his glosses on Genesis reveal the excitement he feels that an origin—a new beginning—(and the basis of true freedom) was afoot thanks to the poets’ unique form of knowledge.

Mussato’s model of civic humanism or poetic/political theology lasted well into the fourteenth century, even if it was constantly tested by bitter controversies to which the works by Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, in their peculiar cadences, bear witness. This model was to prove inadequate. In Florence, in 1423, Leonardo Bruni wrote a letter/tract on the study of literature (*De studiis et literis*) to a woman, Baptista Malatesta of Urbino. In it the unity of the encyclopedic ordering of knowledge is *de facto* fractured. The text is introduced by eloquent acknowledgments of the likely intellectual achievements by modern women who, like the women of antiquity (Cornelia, Sappho, and Aspasia), can be properly educated and be trained to aspire to great heights. However, such a modern woman, so Bruni says, must avoid most of the liberal arts (geometry, astronomy, and even rhetoric) and must avoid neo-scholastic jargon. Instead, she should study history, the classics, and the Christian Fathers (Lactantius, Augustine etc.). By the same token, Pier Paolo Vergerio addressed to Ubertino of Carrara a tractate on the principles of humanist education (*De ingenuis moribus*) and he included under the category of “liberal studies” the traditional liberal arts (grammar, logic, rhetoric, music, arithmetic, geometry and “the science of the stars”). The definition of liberal studies is not kept within this narrow compass. It is broadened in such a way that pride of place is given to history, which is in turn followed by moral philosophy and eloquence, and vindicated the importance of Latin letters as well as medicine, law, and theology.⁸

Whereas Vergerius’ plan of education claimed the enduring importance of human and divine things, Bruni’s letter focused on the value of a classical, pagan education. Underneath his new program of education for women, which the Florentine Dominicans challenged, Bruni forged as a

⁸ The tracts by Vergerius and Bruni are found in William Harrison Woodward, *Vittorino da Feltrè and Other Humanist Educators* (New York, 1963), pp. 93–118 and 123–33, respectively.

political response to the exigencies of his own times, a sharp distinction is drawn between the public, open forum of business transactions and the private, sheltered boundaries of the household. It mattered little that Baptista Malatesta did not heed Bruni's advice and went on to deliver public orations. The net result in Bruni's pedagogical project was unequivocal: poetry, as much as theology, is removed from the city's public square. The secularization of education (and the determination of what is worth knowing from the overarching perspective of political realities) became explicit. Nor was Bruni alone in this radical undertaking to re-define the aims of knowledge. Valla undertook an even more thorough, subtler re-definition of the relation of the arts.

His *Profession of the Religious* sought to dismantle the pretensions of primacy of the religious life and, more poignantly, it tried to uncouple religion from piety. In a way, Valla's tract went back to and directly countered Aquinas' *An Apology for Religious Orders*, and *On the Perfection of Religious Life* (with a detailed discussion of the vows of poverty, obedience, and chastity), in which he both opposed the bitter attacks launched against the mendicants' claims to teach at the University of Paris and answered the doubts about the very value of religious life raised by William of St. Amour. More poignantly, *The Profession of the Religious* got started with the account of a meeting by some apprehensive men of erudition, "standing around in a circle" in a "public hall adjacent to the square."⁹ They were discussing a mysterious conspiracy that had been uncovered that same day in the city. The question was whether or not the friars ought to be held responsible for the treacherous plot against the city, comparable to the Greeks' insidious contrivance of the Trojan horse. Against this ominous background of secret power, conspiratorial activity, and deceptions, Valla staged a public dialogue between a friar and Laurentius about the privileges enjoyed by the religious. Lorenzo Valla's own perspective is made clear by the protagonist's name.

But the symbolic place where the men initially met—not in the square but in a hall next to the public square—and the closed circle in which they arranged themselves convey Valla's double sense of the relation between knowledge and politics. The medieval circle of knowledge has become the secret circle of power, from which theology is to be excluded in the name of the claim to purify religious life of all worldliness. At the same time, the closed circle of friendship signals both Valla's fear about the danger

⁹ Lorenzo Valla, *The Profession of the Religious*, trans. and intro. Olga Zorzi Pugliese (Toronto, 1994), p. 42.

attendant the exercise of an open, public civil conversation as well as his notion of the value of an intellectual elite guarding over the workings of the city. Nonetheless, the old tabulation and ranking of the arts and sciences—politics, theology, philology, rhetoric, grammar, ethics etc.—, challenged by Petrarch because of the contradictions inherent in it, was opened by Valla for a new, critical investigation, which now was to be conducted with the scientific tools of philology.

PART TWO

HUMANISM AND SCHOLASTICISM: TOWARD AN HISTORICAL DEFINITION

Riccardo Fubini

In an autobiographical essay, Paul Oskar Kristeller once recalled that his theory that humanism was part of a tradition that could be traced back to classical rhetoric had been influenced by Werner Jaeger.¹ In fact Kristeller had attended Jaeger's seminars in Berlin, and Jaeger's typification of ancient literary genres influenced his subsequent scholarly career. Jaeger's impact on the works of Hans Baron is even more evident, although for different reasons. As I have pointed out elsewhere, the very design of Baron's *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance* was directly suggested by Jaeger's lecture *Staat und Kultur*.² In its first formulation, Baron's "civic humanism" was nothing but a projection on Italian city-states of Jaeger's assumption that recognized the ideal heritage of classical Greece in its "unity of culture and civic mind" (*Einheit von Bildung and Bürgertum*) as the everlasting concept valid also in the education of modern scholars and patriots.

I will not insist on this point, but I would like to add one further and more general consideration. Both Baron and Kristeller, the two scholars who have had a prominent influence on Italian Renaissance studies in the United States and elsewhere, grounded their historical interpretation on the scholarship of classical antiquity, from which their historical "theses" result. An up-to-date reconsideration of these "theses" must bear this fact in mind.

Now that the myth of inviolable classical models is long gone, we have to try to take Renaissance humanism for what it really was: a vast and multifaceted cultural movement pervading the early modern era, whose roots can be traced to an age that, in spite of all objections, we may surely still call Renaissance. This means—and I apologize if this statement seems

¹ Cf. the anonymous but obviously autobiographical essay "Paul Oskar Kristeller and His Contribution to Scholarship," in *Philosophy and Humanism. Renaissance Essays in Honor of Paul Oskar Kristeller*, ed. Edward P. Mahoney (Leiden, 1976), pp. 1–16.

² See Riccardo Fubini, "Renaissance Historian: The Career of Hans Baron," *Journal of Modern History* 64 (1982), 541–74; see also Fubini, *L'umanesimo italiano e i suoi storici. Origini rinascimentali—critica moderna* (Milan, 2001), pp. 277–316, esp. 307–09; and Werner Jaeger, *Humanistische Reden und Vorträge* (Berlin, 1960), pp. 195–214.

only too obvious—that Renaissance humanism must be traced back to its historical roots. At this point we meet another age-old, renowned doctrine, according to which humanism was primarily a rediscovery of the Greek and Latin texts or, according to Arnaldo Momigliano's formula, was part of the "history of classical studies."³ The fact that we have to resort to these or similar scholarly contributions is enough to show how fruitful this approach has been (I am thinking of, among others, Billanovich's work).⁴ More recently we have seen a further confirmation of this in the extensive work by Ronald Witt who, as an historian of humanism, put himself too "in the footsteps of the ancients."⁵

And yet when we inquire into the very origins of humanism as a cultural movement characterizing the early modern age, it seems to me quite unlikely that a simple analysis of the traditions of antiquity would provide us with an answer. At this point it is expedient to go back to Jacob Burckhardt, namely to the most original thesis of his work, *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien*. At the beginning of his book, Burckhardt displays his doubts about the suitability of the name for which it was mostly renowned—*Renaissance*. He states that he had only chosen it "for lack of a better one." Indeed, it had not been the "revival of antiquity" that marked the coming of the modern era, but more general epoch-making factors of a psychological, political, ideological character that would have developed in the same way even without their formal classical mediation. Consequently, in the plan of the book, the section devoted to antiquity is confined to the third "part," where the term "rebirth" (*Wiedergeburt*) is put in inverted commas; whereas the French name of "Renaissance," chosen for the title of the book, implied the author's intention to challenge the tradition of classicist French rationalism, already questioned elsewhere by Burckhardt.⁶

Let us return to the historical research of our times. The scholar of humanistic culture between the late fourteenth and the beginning of the

³ Arnaldo Momigliano, *Contributo alla storia degli studi classici e del mondo antico*, 8 vols. (Rome, 1955–1987).

⁴ Giuseppe Billanovich, *Petrarca letterato: Lo scrittoio del Petrarca* (Rome, 1947); idem, *La tradizione del testo di Livio e le origini dell'Umanesimo*, 2 vols. (Padua, 1981); idem, *Petrarca e il primo Umanesimo* (Padua, 1996); and also *Vestigia. Studi in onore di Giuseppe Billanovich*, eds. R. Avesani, M. Ferrari, T. Foffano, G. Frasso, and A. Sottili (Rome, 1984).

⁵ Ronald G. Witt, *In the Footsteps of the Ancients: The Origins of Humanism from Lovato to Bruni* (Leiden, 2000). For a more extensive up-to-date bibliography on Renaissance humanism, see now *Palgrave Advances in Renaissance Historiography*, ed. Jonathan Woolfson (New York, 2005).

⁶ Cf. Riccardo Fubini, "Origine e significato del *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien* di Jacob Burckhardt," in idem, *L'umanesimo italiano*, pp. 211–29.

fifteenth century is immediately struck by the difference between a page by Coluccio Salutati and one by Leonardo Bruni, authors who shared the same civic background, moved in the same institutional framework and, at least apparently, followed the same cultural and scholarly careers. A single example representative of their peculiar intellectual attitudes will suffice. Bruni's *Historiae Florentini populi* begin *ex abrupto*: "The founders of Florence were Romans sent by Lucius Sulla to Faesulae" (*Florentiam urbem Romani condidere a Lucio Sylla Faesulas deducti*).⁷ Salutati, like so many others before and after him, listed a series of the various testimonies about the foundation of the city and then chose the one that, according to him, possessed the highest degree of "probability." Bruni had Cicero and Sallust on his side and that was enough for him. A trustworthy source prevails over less accurate ones, and the historian goes directly to a statement of fact even if this means disregarding special traditions, such as, in this case, Florence's foundation by Caesar, according to Villani's *Chronicle*. In other words, from the very beginning of his *Histories*, Bruni moved beyond the framework of scholastic probabilism; that is to say, he transgressed the scholarly rule of examining the degree of trustworthiness (or the "authority") of the evidence and only later giving a verdict on the greater or lesser degree of "probability." "Authority" and "probability," therefore, are merely two sides of the same coin. By disregarding them, Bruni placed himself beyond the boundaries of the old Scholasticism.

However, Bruni's assumptions were not entirely new. Indeed, he referred to Petrarch's works. I am thinking here of the programmatic preface to Petrarch's *De viris illustribus*, where the author harshly condemns "the bold and futile diligence of those who repeat the words of all other historians in order not to appear to have omitted anything and, in so doing, facing contradictory sources, they only shroud the text of their history in hazy clouds and in inextricable tangles."⁸ In fact, the real target of this comment was the probabilistic argument in historiography, with special emphasis on the compilations of universal history. Such an undertaking was conceived of as a re-fusion and merger of all preceding historiographical traditions (the model was provided by the *Speculum historiale* by the thirteenth-century encyclopaedist Vincent of Beauvais). In direct contrast to this doctrinal

⁷ Leonardo Bruni, *History of the Florentine People*, Vol. I: Books I–IV, ed. and trans. James Hankins (Cambridge, MA, 2001), p. 8; cf. R. Fubini, *Storiografia dell'umanesimo in Italia da Leonardo Bruni ad Annio da Viterbo* (Rome, 2003), pp. 93–130.

⁸ Francesco Petrarca, *De viris illustribus*, ed. Guido Martellotti, vol. 1 (Florence, 1964), pp. 3–4; R. Fubini, *Storiografia dell'umanesimo*, pp. 39–51. Hereafter, unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.

approach, Petrarch, as an historian, turned to a particular era, the Roman republic, and to well-defined historical authorities, which allowed him to focus on the actual events of the past: “referring not to the words, but to the facts” (*nec tamen verba transcribere, sed res ipsas*). Moreover, in order to explain his own preferential criteria in selecting his sources, he employed a peculiar expression, almost an oxymoron: “I present myself neither as a pacificator of all the historians nor as a collector of them all, but as an imitator of the ones who are endowed either with a more certain verisimilitude or with a greater authority” (*Ego neque pacificator historicorum neque collector omnium, sed eorum imitator quibus vel verisimilitudo certior vel auctoritas maior est*). Thus *verisimilitudo certior*, i.e. a subjective criterion of verisimilitude verging on a rational judgement, takes the place of the usual rhetorical principle of “authority.” In a more general sense, Petrarch contrasted approved traditions with his own subjective truth, turning it against the scholastic quest for “concordance” (in the sense of the necessary harmony between the manifold appearances of reality and truth).

This is surely not the place to discuss a definition of Scholasticism whose definition is as difficult as that of humanism. However, we can now avail ourselves of Rolf Schönberger’s recent and excellent summary on the topic.⁹ Unlike “humanism,” a term with a general and polyvalent meaning, medieval Scholasticism has at least a few easily recognizable features and, consequently, rests on a more solid body of scholarship. First of all, I would like to stress Schönberger’s statement regarding the “unity of scholasticism as a unity of method.”¹⁰ It is essential to add that such unity was assured through an institutional and normative network (the Church, the universities, the religious orders, the doctoral colleges, etc.). Medieval culture was principally a public matter in that it was a patrimony of sanctioned truths that had been handed down by tradition through authoritative witnesses, the exegesis of doctrine, and the transmission of teaching; hence the identification of doctrine with teaching. The *magister* was not a learned man who elaborated his own thoughts; on the contrary, his task was to transmit “the heritage of truths he had received.”¹¹ Therefore, teaching was a strictly regulated procedure through which tradition was handed down. “In order to understand Scholasticism, it is fundamental to understand the importance of tradition, the strength of the *tradere*, that is, of tradition that integrated

⁹ Rolf Schönberger, *La Scolastica medievale. Cenni per una definizione*, trans. L. Tuninetti (Milan, 1997). Original German edition, *Was ist Scholastik?* (Hildesheim, 1991).

¹⁰ Schönberger, *La Scolastica*, p. 22.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

the individual into a whole that sustained him.”¹² The *auctoritates* were the intermediaries in the transmission of truth. They consisted of both sacred and profane texts officially recognized as being endowed with a “presumption of truth.”¹³ Since truth was entrusted to tradition, that is, to the collection of authoritative texts, the scholastic “in his scientific research always set out from the texts and not directly from the things.”¹⁴ The outstanding importance Scholasticism attached to dialectics resulted from the necessity to harmonize (or, as we have seen Petrarch complain about, to “*concordare*”) the contradictions of the testimonies. But, though essential, dialectics can no more be identified with Scholasticism than humanism can be identified with rhetoric. The speculative intent cannot be separated from the requirements of persuasion and indoctrination (*disputare, persuadere, docere*) according to the prescribed attributes of the *magister*. The crisis of the speculative Scholasticism of the fourteenth century coincided with a heightened interest paid to compilations for the sake of sacred eloquence. Among the masters of the schools, the practice of assembling doctrinal collections went along with theorizing about them. Outstanding among them was Saint Bonaventure, who emphasized his own modest purpose in his commentary to the *Sentences*:

I have no intention of discussing new opinions, but I will rework the common and approved ones (*sed communes et approbatas retexere*). No one must suspect me of trying to construct something new; I shall confine myself to being a poor and humble compiler (*sum pauper et tenuis compilator*).¹⁵

The kind of Scholasticism that Petrarch got to know more closely was not the speculative Scholasticism prevalent in Paris but, rather, the sort of Scholasticism that produced the compilations sponsored by the papal court in Avignon: from the universal history that was being planned in the learned circle around the Colonnas to the commentaries on the *magni auctores* by the Augustinian friar Dionigi of Borgo San Sepolcro, to Pierre Bersuire’s *Ovidius moralizatus*, and lastly to the collections of *exempla* that were being used in preaching. Petrarch’s preface to *De viris illustribus* mentioned above clashed with all that; that is to say, with a culture that, as Saint Bonaventure put it, had given up producing anything new, and first and foremost had

¹² Ibid., p. 123. Schönberger quotes Karl Vorländer, *Geschichte der Philosophie*, 2 (Hamburg, 1964), p. 48.

¹³ Schönberger, *La Scolastica*, p. 94.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 75. Schönberger quotes B. Geyer, “Der Begriff der scholastischen Theologie,” in *Festgabe A. Dyroff*, eds. E. Feldmann and M. Honecker (Bonn, 1926), p. 116.

¹⁵ Cited in Schönberger, *La Scolastica*, pp. 89 and 146.

excluded itself from a fresh approach to reality (hence Petrarch's provocative assumption: *nec tamen verba transcribere sed res ipsas*). If for the scholastics, as it has been written, "the 'authors' were texts,"¹⁶ for Petrarch the author reverts to being a person. This attitude had serious consequences in that it placed Petrarch far beyond the limits of officially recognized teaching. Whereas the "text" was inserted into an ordered hierarchical context, the Petrarchan "author-person" acquired a worth in his own right. In this way culture found again, and proudly claimed, its private dimension; this is a concept Petrarch expressed with one of his favourite adjectives, *familiaris*. Let us consider his main epistolary collection, whose title alone, *De rebus familiaribus*, is enough to set the work against a century-long tradition of chancery *dictamen*. So too does the dialogical arrangement of the *Secretum*. The character "Augustinus" is introduced as a human mediator of truth; thanks to him, "Franciscus" can undertake the discussion that the abstract allegorical character "Truth" had precluded. In this sense Petrarch's dialogue differs profoundly from the usual scholastic dialogue between master and disciple; it becomes indeed "familiar": "*tam familiare colloquium*."¹⁷

Petrarch's criticism, beginning with a dislike of a culture of compilations, challenged the very essence of the scholastic system. The emphasis he placed on the figure of the author-person constituted the real break in continuity with the tradition of "medieval exegesis," as we learn from H. De Lubac's great work.¹⁸ Hence the idea, which Petrarch was the very first to enounce, of the "dark centuries," that is, beyond the metaphorical image, Petrarch's dislike of the method of commentaries, which, instead of clarifying doctrine, ends up obscuring the immediacy of the text. The crucial point in Petrarch's thought was his dismissal of Augustinian teaching (primarily in the fundamental treatise *De doctrina christiana*), which prescribed a utilitarian submission of profane literature to the sacred texts.¹⁹ According to Petrarch, the two fields were entirely distinct; in the *Rerum memorandarum libri* he explains that his own purpose was to rely only on profane texts, "in order not to confuse together so different matters" (*ne res distantissimas importuna permixtione confunderem*). Such an *importuna permixtio*—an

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 95. Schönberger adds: "As regards early Scholasticism, Chenu was the first one to point this out"; cf. M.D. Chenu, "Authentica e magistralia," in idem, *La teologia del XII secolo* (Milan, 1983), pp. 395–410.

¹⁷ Francesco Petrarca, *Prose*, eds. G. Martellotti and E. Carrara (Milan, 1955), p. 26.

¹⁸ Henri De Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale. Les quatre sens de l'Écriture*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1959–1964).

¹⁹ On this see, Carol E. Quillen, *Rereading the Renaissance. Petrarch, Augustine, and the Language of Humanism* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1998).

inappropriate mixture of quite different things—can be read as a very anti-Augustinian definition of medieval Scholasticism by a supposed devotee of Saint Augustine, as Petrarch is considered to be even today.²⁰

Such an approach was destined to create tradition, at first in a concealed form, then more openly and publicly. In one of his last writings of 1406, Coluccio Salutati harshly reproached young Poggio Bracciolini, seemingly for having criticized Petrarch, but in reality for having re-introduced the transgressive, and, therefore, covert, side of Petrarch's thought. According to Poggio, the pre-eminence of the Christian authors that Salutati had corroborated was merely an article of faith, which needed no other justification than the belief itself (*si velles probare, nil possis adducere preter fidem, in qua nulla ratio queritur, sed credulitas sola*).²¹ In his reply to Poggio, Salutati confined himself to emphasizing again the need for a rational explanation of faith according to the traditional axiom of medieval Scholasticism.

Petrarch's postulate, which renounces theology and thereby challenges the principle of a hierarchical order in learning, was welcomed and stressed by his young followers in the new century. It found fertile ground in the young Lorenzo Valla whose aim was to confront Scholasticism as a whole. The modern negative attitude toward Scholasticism begins with Valla. In the words of a contemporary scholar, "Scholasticism has always given its adversaries an impression of great unity and internal homogeneity."²² For Valla the relationship was an antagonistic one. It bore the appearance of an opposition between "me" and "them," which he expressed in a poem (*"Illi me nolunt, eos ego nolo vicissim"* [*"they don't want me and I don't want them"*]) that he placed at the beginning of his philosophical treatise, *Repastinatio dialecticae et philosophiae*.²³ The *Dialectica*, Valla's major philosophical work

²⁰ Francesco Petrarca, *Rerum memorandarum libri*, ed. Giuseppe Billanovich (Florence, 1945), p. 29 (I, 259); cf. R. Fubini, "Luoghi della memoria e antiscolasticismo in Petrarca: i *Rerum memorandarum libri*," in *Visuelle Topoi. Erfindung und tradiertes Wissen in den Künsten der italienische Renaissance*, eds. Ulrich Pfisterer and Max Seidel (Munich, 2003), pp. 171–81; see also R. Fubini, "Pubblicità e controllo del libro nella cultura del Rinascimento," in *Humanisme et Église en Italie et en France méridionale (XV^e siècle—milieu du XVI^e siècle)*, ed. Patrick Gilli (Rome, 2004), pp. 201–37, esp. 212–20.

²¹ Letter from Coluccio Salutati to Poggio Bracciolini, 26th March 1406, in *Epistolario di Coluccio Salutati*, ed. F. Novati, 4 (Rome, 1905), p. 160.

²² Schönberger, *La Scolastica*, p. 36; see also Riccardo Quinto, "'Scolastica.' Contributo alla storia di un concetto. Secoli XIII–XVI," *Medioevo. Rivista di storia della filosofia medievale* 19 (1993), 67–165, esp. 104–12.

²³ Laurentius Valla, *Repastinatio dialecticae et philosophiae*, ed. Gianni Zippel, 2 (Padua, 1982), p. 157. The verses belong to a heading, or "Prologus," of the first version of Valla's treatise; see R. Fubini, "La *Dialectica* di Lorenzo Valla. Saggio di interpretazione," in idem, *L'umanesimo italiano*, pp. 184–207.

(so important to its author but so little known and largely misunderstood today), consists of a real antithesis to Scholasticism. According to Valla, the assertion that “*res*” (“the thing”) is the only “universal” (or “transcendent”) concept, in so far as this noun constitutes the common denominator for all other “things,” means that judgment is oriented directly toward reality, quite independently from doctrinal traditions (or “authorities”). In this way, “*ratio*,” the reason, is fully emancipated from “authority.”²⁴ In other words, the evaluation of reality is predicated on the logical distinction between truth and falsehood, ignoring the probabilism of the authoritative texts. A major point of Valla’s dialectic is the assumption that philosophical discourse should not be allowed to be contaminated by rhetoric. It would be absurd, Valla assumes, for a philosopher to “imitate poets or orators who often speak either according to rhetorical figures or just to bestow more expressiveness on their speech; all this is far removed from the one who wants to speak according to the utmost truth” (*procul ab eo qui loqui vult ad exactissimam veritatem*).²⁵ Like late Scholasticism, Valla adhered to Aristotelian theories of conventionality of language; but, unlike it, he drew very different conclusions. According to Jean Buridan, among others,²⁶ such teaching was valid in order to justify the construction of a conventional language of the mind. Valla, on the other hand, emphasized the ideal of a language endowed with the highest capacity of communication. Therefore, following the criteria implicit in Leonardo Bruni’s translations of Aristotle,²⁷ Valla relied on the essential meanings of the ancient Latin language, while scholastic alterations were excluded. Lastly, Valla’s categorical scheme is all-inclusive and as such does not admit any subordination to theology. Valla’s philosophy can be defined as a kind of radical nominalism, where God, or

²⁴ It has often been maintained that Valla depended on Ockham’s logic but this relationship has recently been questioned; see Lodi Nauta, “William of Ockham and Lorenzo Valla: False Friends. Semantics and Ontological Reduction,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 56 (2003), 613–51. This is an interesting piece of scholarship, but it does raise some doubts about its methodology. It is only too obvious that Valla’s philosophy was not Ockham’s, but the real issue is about the suggestions Valla got from Ockham’s logic. These points are well documented and concern his radical exclusion of theology from the philosophical domain, and the claim that the true object of knowledge is only the empiricism of individuals. For the similarities (and differences) between Valla and Ockham, see among others: Francesco Bottin, *La scienza degli Occamisti. La scienza tardo-medievale dalle origini del paradigma nominalista alla rivoluzione scientifica* (Rimini, 1982), pp. 197–200; Charles Trinkaus, “Valla’s Anti-Aristotelian Natural Philosophy,” *I Tatti Studies* 5 (1993), 279–325.

²⁵ Valla, *Repastinatio*, p. 389 (I.9.4); Fubini, “*La Dialectica*,” pp. 188–189.

²⁶ Schönberger, *La Scolastica*, pp. 98–101.

²⁷ See Fubini, *L’umanesimo italiano*, pp. 108–114; James Hankins, “Translation Practice in the Renaissance. The Case of Leonardo Bruni,” in idem, *Humanism and Platonism in the Italian Renaissance*, 2 vols. (Rome, 2003), 1:177–92.

more precisely the word meaning the divinity, is a name among other names, outside the philosophical domain proper, whereas the theological meanings remain impenetrable. According to Valla's *Elegantiae*, faith is tantamount to "persuasion" and, as such, it does not require the comfort of proof (*qui persuasus est plane acquiescit nec ulteriorem probationem desiderat*).²⁸

It has already been mentioned that Valla considered his *Dialectica* as the most important of his works. He intended to have it published in solemn form, decorated with a biblical emblem of branches bearing golden apples, evoking the image of the fertile evangelical tree that produces such good fruits, as opposed to the sterile tree of Scholasticism.²⁹ In fact things took a different turn. Valla did not overcome the censors' opposition. Despite changes and revisions, the work was still unedited at the time of his death. It was only printed later in quite a different scholarly context. It is worth remembering that Petrarch's works, too, had remained unedited until after his death, and the same thing occurred with Valla's *Dialectica*. In spite of its ambitions, radical humanism (if I may so call it) failed in its intention to obtain public reception of its purposes and arguments against institutional Scholasticism. In order to become a publicly recognized culture, the *studia humanitatis* had to comply with the requirements of the schools as a good propaedeutics to higher university curricula. As scholars have long since explained, the very name *humanista* had its origins in this more restricted context.³⁰ In the days of Bruni and Valla the so-called "humanists" identified with more ambitious names such as *literati homines, docti, philosophi*.³¹ This is the same nomenclature (*gens de lettres, savants, philosophes*) we find in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries among the French rationalists and the adherents of the Enlightenment.

The challenge to Scholasticism that I have discussed in this essay did not cease at this point, as is well known.³² On the contrary it went on through

²⁸ Laurentius Valla, *Elegantiae*, in idem, *Opera omnia*, con una premessa di E. Garin, I (Turin, 1962), p. 172; Fubini, "La *Dialectica*," pp. 202, 205.

²⁹ Laurentius Valla, *Epistolae*, eds. Mariangela Regoliosi and Ottavio Besomi (Padua, 1984), p. 213; and Fubini, "Pubblicità e controllo del libro," p. 203.

³⁰ Cf. Paul Oskar Kristeller, *The Classics and Renaissance Thought* (Cambridge, MA, 1955), pp. 8–9; Giuseppe Billanovich, "Auctorista, humanista, orator," *Rivista di cultura classica e medievale* 7 (1965), 143–63.

³¹ See R. Fubini, *Umanesimo e secolarizzazione da Petrarca a Valla* (Rome, 1990), pp. 140–41 (and also idem, *Humanism and Secularization from Petrarch to Valla*, trans. Martha King [Durham, NC, 2003], pp. 195–96); R. Fubini, "Sogno e realtà dell'umanesimo. Contributi recenti sull'umanesimo italiano," *Archivio storico italiano* 160 (2002), 87–111.

³² A significant case in point are the secret, moral writings of Girolamo Rorario. On this see Aidea Scala, *Girolamo Rorario. Un umanista diplomatico del Cinquecento e i suoi dialoghi* (Florence, 2004).

the centuries until it was recognized as a premise to a culture and to philosophical teachings conceived as an alternative to medieval Christian doctrine. The open or hidden ways of continuity are indeed of the greatest interest, but the outcome belongs to another story.

RELIGION AND THE MODERNITY OF RENAISSANCE HUMANISM

James Hankins

When some sixty years ago, in the middle of the Second World War, Paul Oskar Kristeller began his great project of reinterpreting Renaissance humanism, he could not possibly have imagined just how fruitful his hypothesis would prove to be in the decades to follow. As is well known, Kristeller rejected the historiographical tradition descending from Francesco Fiorentino, Bertrando Spaventa, Giovanni Gentile and Ernst Cassirer that tended to assimilate Renaissance humanism to modern philosophical humanisms—humanism as a philosophy of man—and insisted on historicizing the phenomenon. His goal was to make a clean distinction between contemporary humanism and the *studia humanitatis* of the Renaissance.¹ For Kristeller humanism was a literary movement inspired by the antique but with its roots in the Middle Ages; in one famous formulation, he described the movement as a particular stage in the history of rhetoric; in another, as a cycle of disciplines embracing grammar, rhetoric, history, poetry and moral philosophy.² Kristeller's interpretation of humanism, widely accepted in the Anglo-Saxon world, gave rise in its turn to a major historiographical tradition, and one which is still lively and creative, to judge from two recent books, Ronald Witt's *In the Footsteps of the Ancients*³ and Robert Black's *Humanism and Education in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*.³

¹ See James Hankins, "Renaissance Humanism and Historiography Today," in *Palgrave Advances in Renaissance Historiography*, ed. Jonathan Woolfson (New York, 2005), pp. 73–96; also the article of Robert Black, "The Renaissance and Humanism: Definitions and Origins," in the same volume, pp. 97–117. See also my essays, "Two Twentieth-Century Interpreters of Renaissance Humanism," and "Renaissance Philosophy between God and the Devil," both in *Humanism and Platonism in the Italian Renaissance*, 2 vols. (Rome, 2003–04), 1: 573–90 and 1: 591–615, respectively.

² Kristeller stated his views on Renaissance humanism in many places, but they are conveniently summarized in Paul Oskar Kristeller, "The Humanist Movement," in idem, *Renaissance Thought and Its Sources*, ed. Michael Mooney (New York, 1979), pp. 21–32.

³ Ronald G. Witt, *In the Footsteps of the Ancients: The Origins of Humanism from Lovato to Bruni* (Leiden, 2000); Robert Black, *Humanism and Education in Medieval and Renaissance Italy: Tradition and Innovation in Latin Schools from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge, 2001). For a recent Italian dissent from Kristeller's interpretation, see Riccardo Fubini, "Renaissance Humanism and its Development in Florentine Civic Culture," in *Palgrave Advances*, pp. 118–38.

Witt and Black are hardly in accord on every issue, but it is worth pointing out that they are very much in agreement about one key element of Kristeller's view of humanism, namely, the continuity between medieval literary culture and Renaissance humanism. Both books, indeed, could almost be regarded as radicalizations or extreme forms of the Kristeller thesis. Witt's book makes the argument for continuity in far stronger terms than Kristeller ever did; for him, the origins of Italian humanism are to be found in the later thirteenth century, when certain figures in Tuscany and northeastern Italy took over the literary heritage of high medieval France, gradually extending and transforming it through various literary genres. Black's book insists on the continuity of grammatical instruction from the early thirteenth century through the end of the fifteenth, and argues that the real educational innovators in the Western humanist tradition are to be found, not in the early fifteenth, but in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Belief in a fundamental continuity between medieval and Renaissance culture is undoubtedly now dominant through most of the Anglo-Saxon academic universe, and has had the predictable result of (further) undermining the period concept of the Renaissance.⁴ Even a scholar such as Quentin Skinner, who has recently reasserted the distinctiveness of Renaissance republicanism, has nevertheless himself done much to undercut that distinctiveness by his researches into medieval republican thought.⁵ The present writer has no wish to call the continuity thesis into question, and Kristeller, Witt and Black are doubtless correct in finding the roots of humanism as a stylistic ideal in the High Middle Ages (though one can also agree with Riccardo Fubini that the full ideological consciousness of the movement emerges only with Petrarch).⁶ Yet there is no contradiction in also examining the literary products of the humanists for the marks of modernity. Even if the posture of a man with one foot in the Middle Ages, saluting with the other the rising dawn of the Renaissance—to quote Charles Homer Haskins' famous phrase—is an awkward one, it is by no means an illogical one. Unless we believe, against all the evidence, that origins are destiny, or that the medieval and the modern are mutually exclusive categories, it seems

⁴ See Fubini's acute remark in the article cited in the previous note (p. 123) that "It is evident that an historiography that approaches such an imposing break with tradition in a traditional spirit cannot but confound its own *raison d'être*."

⁵ Quentin Skinner, "Introduction: The Reality of the Renaissance," in *Visions of Politics*, 2 (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 1–9, but see chapters 2–4 in the same volume.

⁶ Fubini, "Renaissance Humanism," pp. 123–24.

perfectly possible *a priori* that at some point in its development, in some branches of its activity, the humanist movement developed ideas, methods and intellectual routines that are recognizably modern. It is even, dare one say it, perfectly possible that important aspects of modernity had their roots in the thought of the Italian humanists, even if the latter were primarily literary men and did not constitute a philosophical school.

One problem with hunting for the roots of modernity, of course, is that the idea of modernity is polysemous—its definition varies depending on whether one is an economic historian, an historian of the arts or of science, a social historian or an historian of politics and political theory. Modernity is also a moving target. What was modern for Burckhardt in the nineteenth century is no longer modern for us. For Burckhardt, what stood out as modern was the dominance of the nation state, liberal individualism, secularism and the decline of religious belief. None of these “modern” phenomena would necessarily be considered modern today. For example, many, especially in Europe, believe the nation state belongs in the dustbin of history and is destined to be replaced by supranational or international orders. While liberal individualism has enjoyed great success in the social sphere, morphing, since the 1960s especially, into the more radical and demotic forms of expressive individualism and the culture of authenticity, it has not been popular among political theorists for at least a generation, and its behaviors are more and more divorced from the political realm. Libertarians are just about the only theorists who still want to erect individualism into a political theory, and they are a tiny minority in the academy and the political sphere in general. And while institutional religion has continued to be moribund in Europe, the same is not true of the rest of the world. Christianity and Islam are the fastest-growing religions in the world, far outpacing the spread of secular philosophies, and it is the conservative, dogmatic forms of these religions which have proved the most successful, not their more liberal or “modern” variants. There may be a Unitarian or two in China, for all we know, but there are not many. Comte’s positivist prophecy of a scientific and secular future has failed to materialize outside Western Europe, and even there is under threat from the spread of Islam. Hostility to dogmatism has a tendency to slide into lack of conviction, it seems, which is a poor defense against the passionate intensity of true believers. Even the Enlightenment hope for progress towards religious universalism, towards finding some “essence of religion” on which all religions could agree, thus bringing an end to religious war, has been fatally undermined. Modern anthropological and sociological understandings of religion as a family-resemblance concept

makes it increasingly implausible that any reductionist approach to dogma will yield something like religious unity.⁷

It is religion that I wish to discuss here, and more particularly, the modernity of a certain strain of Renaissance humanism with respect to its understanding of religion. It can be argued, it seems to me, that philosophers like Nicolaus Cusanus, Marsilio Ficino, Pico della Mirandola, and Francesco Patrizi of Cherso explored a new way of thinking about religion that has numerous analogies with the way religion is understood in the contemporary world. It might be objected that, by Kristeller's definition of humanism, Cusanus, Ficino, Pico and Patrizi are philosophers, not humanists. But even if we embrace Kristeller's strict separation between humanists and philosophers, a conceptual operation not always easy to perform, it cannot be denied that these thinkers were deeply marked by the humanist study of antiquity. The matter could be put even more strongly, for it is surely true that the humanist element in their thought is primarily responsible for their attitude is religion. It was the effort to comprehend and incorporate ancient religious wisdom into Christianity that sparked Renaissance philosophy's most profound meditations on the nature of religion itself.

The understanding of religion I am referring to is found in texts such as Bessarion's *Oratio dogmatica de Unione* (1439), Cusanus' *De pace fidei* (1453), Ficino's *De christiana religione* (1474) and *Theologia platonica de immortalitate* (1482), Patrizi's *Nova de universis philosophia* (1593) and more implicitly in Pico's *Oration* and *Nine Hundred Theses* (1486). In these writings, Renaissance thinkers move beyond the antagonistic categories used to typologize religions that are found in ancient and medieval Christian writers: the categories of obsolescence and heresy. In these conceptions, as described by R.W. Southern and other scholars, Judaism and paganism are ordinarily relegated to the category of obsolescence. Though the Jews were vouchsafed a shadowy religious truth through the law and the prophets, that wisdom was now fulfilled and superseded by Christian revelation, and Jews who persisted in the old law were typically seen by Christians as "stubborn" or "stiff-necked" for their refusal to accept the new dispensation. The pagans had had their wise men, some of whom had intimations of Christian truth, but their religion was corrupt and pernicious, and their gods were demons bent on destroying true religion. Greek Orthodox Christians were heretics and schismatics, their defiance of Rome's authority

⁷ Anthony Giddens, *Sociology* (Oxford, 1989), p. 452; John Hick, *The Interpretation of Religion: Human Responses to the Transcendent*, 2nd ed. (New Haven, CT, 2004), pp. 3–5.

leading them to embrace Trinitarian heresy about the procession of the Holy Spirit. Islam was the worst of all. Mohammed was a false prophet possessed by a demon, and the Koran was dictated by demons. The admixture of praiseworthy elements in it was merely a demonic ploy to delude the wise and good. Islam in general was an evil heresy, a scourge sent by God to punish faithless Christians.⁸

When the humanist movement began to gain ground in Italy in the later fourteenth century, these traditional, clerical attitudes and beliefs began to come under pressure. The popularity of the philosophical works of Cicero, with their urbane assumption that the theological beliefs of educated people had little or nothing in common with popular religion, surely had a wide impact. The *De natura deorum* in particular presented the innumerable humanist admirers of Cicero with an understanding of religion inimical to clerical dogmatism. Cicero goes so far as to claim (1.10) that dogmatic statements by authoritative teachers are a positive hindrance to honest inquiry. Cicero's own inclination to the reductive universalism of the Stoics (3.95), which amounts to a belief in God, Providence, the divine perfection of the world and human participation in divine reason, is combined with a prudential commitment to preserving traditional rites and ceremonies; he manages to convey the strong suggestion that in the expression of religious beliefs private convictions need to be subordinated to the public needs of the state (2.168, 3.5). The latter position is one echoed by Poggio in the *Historia tripartita*, Thomas More in his *Utopia*, as well as by Machiavelli and Montaigne, among others.

The humanist project in general, of course, entailed a more deferential attitude to pagan antiquity—indeed in some cases a positive adoration of the classical world—and this relative openness to pagan culture seems to have led to a kind of cognitive dissonance. Something had to be done to rescue pagan wisdom and distinguish it from the crude pagan superstitions excoriated by the Church Fathers. Thus Boccaccio and Salutati rediscovered the late third- and early fourth-century strand of Christian apologetics typified by Lactantius and Eusebius that found a close kinship between the theologies of the pagan philosophers and more sophisticated styles of Christian theology. This high paganism was ultimately, by Ficino and others, identified with Platonism and its forerunners, Hermetism, Orphism, and

⁸ Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Edinburgh, 1958); Richard W. Southern, *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, MA, 1962); Franco Cardini, *Europe and Islam*, trans. Caroline Beamish (Oxford, 1999); Nancy Bisaha, *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks* (Philadelphia, 2004).

Zoroastrianism. To be sure, the more circumspect—and more authoritative—theologies of Jerome, Ambrose and Augustine a century later aimed to make clearer distinctions between what was pagan and what was Christian, even while exploiting the conceptual apparatus and authority of the pagan philosophers for apologetic ends. But Augustine, Ambrose and even Jerome could be read—and were read—selectively, as simple endorsements of the value of pagan philosophy to Christians.

My impression is that the effort to recover and incorporate this alien religious wisdom—the product of a separate revelation rather than mere natural reason—ultimately underlay the new attitude to religious diversity one finds in the fifteenth century, as well as the strikingly ecumenical attitudes of humanists at the Council of Florence.⁹ If the fourth-century Latin Church Fathers had been line-drawers, Quattrocento humanists were line-blurrers. They were eager to show the common ground between Christians and virtuous pagans—unlike Augustine or Jerome, who were concerned to make paganism less glamorous to Christians and potential converts.¹⁰ But the same receptive attitude could carry over to other religions, even contemporary religions. Thus Cusanus in the vision-dialogue *De pace fidei* (1453) employs a kind of metaphysical reductionism to translate Christian conceptions such as the Trinity, the Incarnation and the Redemption into terms acceptable to Muslims, Jews and Hindus. The Trinity, for example, is an expression of the inherent metaphysical interrelationship of *unitas*, *aequalitas*, and *connexio*.¹¹ Cusanus hopes that his version of Neoplatonic metaphysics, particularly his Proclan principle of the *coincidentia oppositorum*, will provide a basis for inter-religious dialogue and religious peace.¹² This is quite different from Thomas Aquinas' approach in the *Summa contra Gentiles* where certain general theological truths, "preambles of the faith," are established by natural reason as a preliminary to converting non-Christians to specifically Christian beliefs. Cusanus' position is

⁹ On this see my *Plato in the Italian Renaissance*, 2 vols. (Leiden, 1990), 1: 221–225.

¹⁰ See for example Augustine's remarkable *De vera religione*, where he tries to convince philosophical pagans that the spread of Christianity was the fulfillment of the wildest dreams of the philosophers for the spread of virtue and spiritual enlightenment.

¹¹ *De pace fidei* 6.17, in Nicolaus Cusanus, *Opera omnia iussu et auctoritate Academiae Litterarum Heidelbergensis*, 7.1–2: *De pace fidei, cum epistula ad Ioannem de Segobia*, ed. Raymond Klibansky and Hildebrand Bascour (Hamburg, 1959–70), p. 16. See Rudolf Haubst, *Das Bild des einen und dreieinen Gottes in der Welt nach Nikolaus von Kues* (Trier, 1952) for Cusanus' sources, particularly Augustine's *De trinitate*.

¹² See James E. Biechler, "Interreligious Dialogue," in *Introducing Nicholas of Cusa. A Guide to a Renaissance Man*, eds. Christopher M. Bellitto, Thomas M. Izbicki, and Gerald Christianson (New York, 2004), pp. 270–296.

that Muslims *already* believe distinctive Christian doctrines implicitly. In his later *Cribatio Alkorani* (1461) he tries to show that the teaching of Muhammed in the Koran is “implicitly trinitarian and christological,”¹³ and that a person “of vigorous intellect” who read the Koran piously would be led from the letter of the text and the sensible world to a knowledge of the divine.¹⁴ Here Cusanus’ Neoplatonism appears to be the forerunner of Enlightenment universalism, anticipating the religious ideas of figures such as Ralph Cudworth and Matthew Tindal. Given this lineage it is perhaps no surprise that Cusanus’ conception in the *De pace fidei* of “una religio in varietate rituum” bears a remarkable resemblance to the Oxford indologist F. Max Mueller’s definition of religion as “a disposition which enables men to apprehend the infinite under different names and disguises.”¹⁵

The same receptive attitude to non-Christian religious truths is found in Pico’s *Oration* and *Nine Hundred Theses*. There, if my understanding of these texts is correct, pagan, Jewish, Islamic, Hindu and other theologies are mined with a view to enabling a higher synthesis, a synthesis still recognizably Christian, but immeasurably deepened, enriched, and strengthened by the treasuries of religious wisdom found in other traditions, including ancient theologies such as Platonism, Hermetism, Zoroastrianism, Orphism, medieval Arabic theology and Jewish Kabbalism.¹⁶ Pico’s aim, to be sure, is not to show that all theologies agreed in all respects. He was not an eclectic of the ancient type who believed that all philosophers agreed in substance, disagreeing only about words. He held that every major theological tradition contained elements of truth and that these elements could be combined into a grand synthesis that was at the same time compatible with orthodox Christianity. Like Nicholas of Cusa in the *Cribatio Alkorani*, he believed that the understanding previous theologians had of the sources of their own theological traditions was not necessarily correct. In fact his aim was to construct a new theology using material from existing historical theologies as building blocks. His new theology would be superior to existing theologies because it would give a richer understanding of Christian

¹³ Biechler, “Interreligious Dialogue,” p. 285.

¹⁴ See especially the *Cribatio Alkorani*, 1.20, “Digressio ad manuductionem divinatorum,” in Cusanus, *Opera Omnia*, vol. 8: *Cribatio Alkorani*, ed. Ludwig Hagemann (Hamburg, 1986), pp. 94–100.

¹⁵ Cited by Alistair E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, 3rd ed. (Oxford, 2001), p. 536.

¹⁶ Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Oration and Nine Hundred Theses*, ed. Brian P. Copenhaver, et al., forthcoming in the I Tatti Renaissance Library (Cambridge, MA, 2007). On Pico’s concordism in general see Fernand Roullet, *Jean Pic de Mirandole (1463–1494), humaniste, philosophe et théologien* (Geneva, 1989).

truths. This is not to imply that Pico was interested in directly challenging Christian dogmas. But he did wish (like many humanists) to move Christian theological speculation beyond the narrow circle of traditional authorities represented by Aristotle, the Bible and the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard. Situating Christian theology in the spectrum of world theologies would show both the superiority of Christian truth and the presence of Christian truths in all religions. Pico's ecumenism is therefore a militant ecumenism. In this respect, he reminds one of modern theologians like the Jesuit Karl Rahner.¹⁷ But it could be argued that Pico is even more open to non-Christian religious traditions than Rahner, given his hope that recovering the esoteric truths of other religious traditions would make the mysteries of Christianity more intelligible.

The first half of the sixteenth century was obviously not a period when ecumenical gestures towards non-Christian religions would find ready welcome, but before the passions of the Reformation took hold in the 1520s, it did produce one famous and influential text which mirrored the religious ideas of the Renaissance Neoplatonists, namely Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516). The relationship of this text to fifteenth-century Italian Platonism has not, I think, been fully appreciated. In the section of *Utopia* "On the Religions of the Utopians," More acknowledges that his Utopians have a number of religions, but the "vast majority, and those by far the wiser ones" hold to a philosophical conception of the divinity:

a single divinity, unknown, eternal, immeasurable, inexplicable, beyond the grasp of the human mind, and diffused throughout the universe, not by his mass, but by his power. Him they call their parent, and to him alone they attribute the origin, increase, progress, changes and ends of all things.¹⁸

Here More excludes a materialistic conception of the divinity, typical of ancient Stoicism, and like Plotinus, Proclus and Nicolaus Cusanus (but unlike Thomas Aquinas) sees God or the One as radically unknowable. As in ancient and Renaissance Platonic theology he is related to creation by his power (*virtus*), and is the source, pattern and goal of all created reality. More goes on to say that the Utopians call their god Mythra, who is

¹⁷ Karl Rahner, S.J., "Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions," in *Theological Investigations*, 5 (London, 1966), pp. 115–34.

¹⁸ Thomas More, *Utopia. Latin Text and English Translation*, eds. George M. Logan, Robert M. Adams and Clarence H. Miller (Cambridge, Eng., 1995), p. 219 (the translation has been slightly adjusted). The Latin is: "unum quoddam numen putant, incognitum, aeternum, immensum, inexplicabile, quod supra mentis humanae captum sit, per mundum hunc universum virtute, non mole diffusum; hunc parentem vocant. Origines, auctus, progressus, vices, finesque rerum omnium huic acceptos uni referunt."

generally identified by commentators with the Persian god Mithras. This suggests that More was thinking in terms of an ancient theology derived from Zoroastrianism, Mithras being often invoked in the *Chaldaean Oracles* which Ficino, following Pletho, attributed to Zoroaster. As Zoroastrianism was the form of religious wisdom specific to Asia in Ficino's conception, it was the most appropriate one for Utopia. The Utopians, More says, believe monotheism was established by the consensus of all nations (*omnium consensu gentium*) and states that Utopian society was moving away from a variety of superstitions in the direction of a single philosophical religion "more reasonable than any of the others" (*quae reliquas ratione videtur antecellere*). The fact that the Utopians easily convert to Christianity, "either through secret inspiration or because Christianity seemed very like the sect that most prevails among them," is meant to show, I think, that Utopia is simply at an earlier stage of historical development vis à vis religion, and that their ancient philosophical religion has well prepared them to receive the truths of the Gospel—so long as these are not presented in an exclusivist way.¹⁹ The state religion of Utopia enforces belief only in the doctrines of Providence and the immortality of the soul, the basis of all religion according to Ficino, and public worship is so organized as not to exclude any particular religion; rites peculiar to particular religions are practiced in private. Utopus is said to have been against dogmatism on the grounds that God perhaps likes "diverse and manifold forms of worship (*cultus*) and hence inspires different people with different ones,"²⁰ a view that echoes Ficino's statement in the *De christiana religione* that variety of worship "in accordance with God's ordination, perhaps engenders a certain marvelous glory in the world."²¹ Like Cusanus's vision of religious unity in the *De pace fidei (una religio in varietate rituum)*, all Utopian religions agree on the central truth of religion, the worship of God: "they are like travelers going to a single destination by different roads."²²

More's proto-Enlightenment message of using philosophy to overcome religious discords was largely drowned out in the clamor of Reformation controversy. But when Ficinian Platonism was revived in the later sixteenth century it is clear that one of the attractions of his *pia philosophia* was

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 218–223.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 222–3; see also note 22.

²¹ Marsilio Ficino, *Opera omnia*, 2 vols. (Basel, 1576, repr. Turin, 1983), 1: 4.

²² More, *Utopia*, p. 235: "Quae quoniam non est ibi apud omnes eadem [religio], et universae tamen eius formae quamquam variae ac multiplices in divinae naturae cultum velut in unum finem diversa via commigrant, idcirco nihil in templis visitur auditurque quod non quadrare ad cunctas in commune videatur."

the hope it offered of religious concord. The motive is stated explicitly in the preface to Francesco Patrizi da Cherso's *Nova de universis philosophia*, published in 1593 and dedicated to Pope Gregory XIII "and to all Future Roman Pontiffs."²³ In the preface to this work, Patrizi denounces contemporary philosophy, citing the common saying: "He's a philosopher, he doesn't believe in God." "People see that in all the gymnasia of Europe, in all the monasteries, only Aristotelian philosophy is taught with great ambition and with great rewards." It was only Platonic philosophy, pious philosophy, which could heal the divisions of the Christian commonwealth, supply an adequate philosophical support for Christian theology, and provide the strongest weapons in the battle against heresy. For Patrizi, as for Cusanus, the best remedy for heresy was to absorb and sublimate its partial, merely verbal truths into a higher metaphysical truth. By reforming Catholic theology along Platonic lines Patrizi hoped to tap into an ancient wisdom that would permit a higher theological synthesis—a synthesis that could in turn embrace, rather than suppress, theological traditions outside of the Roman Church, including Judaism, Islam, paganism, and the religious beliefs of pre-Columbian civilizations in the New World. The old marriage between Christian theology and Aristotelianism, Patrizi believed, was now dysfunctional, and could lead only to the forcing of consciences and the use of violence against those outside the Church. Patrizi urges the Pope to have his new universal Platonic philosophy be taught everywhere in Christendom so that Christian wisdom may be renewed.

In short, the Renaissance Platonists can be seen as pioneers of modern interfaith dialogue, the dialogue that is so prominent a feature of organized religions today. It is true that none of them could be described as true religious pluralists, as they did not regard all religions as equally valid pathways to spiritual reality.²⁴ That position seems to depend on an assumption of the indemonstrability of religious truth, which is in turn dependent on a more

²³ Francesco Patrizi da Cherso, *Nova de universis philosophia libris quinquaginta comprehensa, in qua Aristotelica methodo non per motum sed per lucem & lumina ad primam causam ascenditur, deinde nova quadam ac peculiari methodo tota in contemplationem venit divinitas, postremo methodo Platonica rerum universitas à conditore Deo deducitur, auctore Francisco Patritio, philosopho eminentissimo et in celeberrimo Romano gymnasio summa cum laude eandem Philosophiam publice interpretante* (Venice, 1593). See James Hankins, "Plato's Psychogony in the Later Renaissance: Changing Attitudes to the Christianization of Pagan Philosophy," forthcoming in the proceedings of the conference *Die Rezeption von Platons «Timaios» in Antike, Mittelalte und Renaissance*, Villa Vigoni, Lake Como, 21–25 May 2003, to be published in *Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, vol. 32, eds. Thomas Leinkauf and Carlos Steel (Leuven, 2005), pp. 393–412.

²⁴ The terms "pluralist" and "inclusivist" (below) are taken from McGrath, *Christian Theology*, pp. 544–51.

modern epistemology than was available in the Renaissance.²⁵ But there is considerable common ground between Renaissance Platonists and modern inclusivists theologians, found primarily in the Catholic and Anglican churches, who emphasize the religious truths found in other traditions. Karl Rahner's argument that Christians should be able to discern valid elements in the holy books of other faiths, just as they find still valid truths in the Old Testament, has a precise parallel in Ficino's idea of an ancient theology whose wisdom is still of high value in the post-Incarnational world. Even if Renaissance Platonists might not have gone so far as Rahner in affirming the soteriological potential of other faiths—at least in the interest of avoiding unwanted attentions from the Inquisition—they perhaps go farther than Rahner in asserting the potential of other faiths to illuminate the Christian faith. Had there been fewer constraints on freedom of religious expression, it is possible, even likely, that the Platonists' tendency to conflate salvation and contemplative union with God would have led to a more robust affirmation of the possibility of salvation outside the Church. Ficino's famous comparisons of Socrates with Christ and Moses with Plato in Book 8 of his *Letters* suggest as much.²⁶

Ficino is perhaps the Renaissance thinker who meditated most profoundly on the nature of religion, and his writings illustrate a number of ways in which the situation of Renaissance Christians anticipates the modern religious situation—or perhaps one should say the modern religious predicament. If we turn to Book 14 of the *Platonic Theology*, for example, we find in chapters 9 and 10 a remarkable discussion of religion which is here, of course, instrumental to the work's larger purpose of proving the immortality of the soul.²⁷ Ficino begins by asking what constitutes the distinct perfection of human nature—what is it that truly separates mankind from the animals? It is not the ability to make different objects or to govern ourselves, since the beasts also do this in a way. It is not speech that distinguishes us, as Cicero or Valla might claim, since the animals

²⁵ See Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion*, whose pluralism is built on Kant's distinction between the noumenal (the transcendent) and the phenomenal (particular beliefs of world religions).

²⁶ Marsilio Ficino, *Epistole* (Venice, 1495), conveniently available in facsimile with a collation of the MSS. in *The Letters of Marsilio Ficino*, trans. Members of the Language Department of the School of Economic Science, London, 7 (London, 2003), pp. 157–86; the relevant letters are on pp. 159–62. For a perceptive discussion of natural religion in Ficino, see Paul Richard Blum, "La religione naturale di Marsilio Ficino," in *Marsilio Ficino ou les Mystères Platoniciens*, ed. Stéphane Toussaint (Paris, 2002), pp. 313–26. On the possibility of the salvation of the pagans, see further below.

²⁷ Marsilio Ficino, *Platonic Theology*, eds. and trans. Michael J.B. Allen and James Hankins, 6 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 2001–2006), 4: 290–329.

also communicate for social purposes. It is not even practical or speculative reason, for even these activities “seem to have a shadowy counterpart among the beasts.” Here, of course, Ficino is breaking radically with the Aristotelian tradition, which regarded reason as the specific difference of human nature, and his discussion of the rational powers of beasts makes him sound almost like Darwin in *The Descent of Man* (chapters 3–4). What Ficino identifies as the special perfection of man is religion, defined as contemplation of the divine, or shortly afterwards as “that instinct which is common and natural to all peoples and which we everywhere and always use to think about Providence and to worship it as the queen of the world.” Humanity is led to this universal piety by a “natural sagacity infused in us by Providence itself;” by philosophical reasons (especially the argument from design); and by prophecy and miracles. As we have already learned in Book 13, prophecy and miracles are phenomena by no means confined to the Christian world, but are found wherever the divine darts down and orders time and nature after its own image.²⁸ And since mankind is naturally social, it naturally stands in need of a divine lawgiver, whether his name is Moses, Numa Pompilius, or Mohammed.

This is not to say that all revelations are equal, of course, and in the *De christiana religione* we learn that, if Christianity is not the only avenue of God’s self-disclosure, it is the highest. “At no time does Divine Providence allow any part of the world to be without some kind of religious wisdom”—Hermetism in Africa, Zoroastrianism in Asia, Orphism and Druidism in Europe—but there are higher and lower forms of religious wisdom, and there are also moments in history when religious wisdom has lain dormant or hidden in obscurity.²⁹ Christianity is the highest and clearest and fullest form of religious wisdom, the wisdom that provides keys to unlock the mysteries of other religious traditions. Still, the divine is naturally knowable by all men, and for Ficino, as for Cusanus and More’s Utopians, the rite according to which one worships is ultimately less important than what and how one worships. As he writes in the argument to Plato’s *Laws*, Book 8,

²⁸ Note that, unlike Aquinas, Ficino does not distinguish between Christian miracles done *in virtute divina* and non-Christian miracles; like Avicenna Ficino has a naturalistic account of miracles that assimilates them all, pagan and Christian, to the same set of supranormal psychic powers. See James Hankins, “Ficino, Avicenna and the Occult Powers of the Soul,” forthcoming in the proceedings of the conference *La magia nell’Europa moderna. Tra antica sapienza e filosofia naturale: tradizioni e mutamenti* (Florence, Istituto Nazionale di Studi sul Rinascimento). More’s *Utopia* also seems to defend the idea of non-Christian miracles which the Utopians believe to be “direct and visible manifestations of the divinity.” More, *Utopia*, pp. 226–7.

²⁹ Ficino, *Opera omnia*, 1: 31–32.

Plato held one should not pay so much attention to the rite according to which one worshipped as to the reason why one worshipped. For if you did this for the sake of the highest king of all [an epithet of God used in ps. Plato, *Epistulae* 2.312e] and out of desire for eternal goods, it is probable that from whatever source and in whatever way you begin, you will through worship of this kind at some time approach nearer the highest, and either be surrounded by his immense light or at least saved by his overflowing goodness.³⁰

The last phrase is roughly equivalent to “perfected in intellect or at least in will”; the need for both faculties to be perfected is a common Augustinian theme in Ficino’s philosophy.

Ficino seems here to be saying through Plato’s mouth that divine illumination and salvation are available to all men, irrespective of the religious rites they follow—even perhaps that the Beatific Vision and *summum gaudium* are available to non-Christians. As generally in his writings, he assimilates the Platonic vision of the Good to the Beatific Vision.

It should be noted that Ficino’s attitude to other religions in these passages is not one of mere tolerance. Tolerance implies that one is oneself in possession of the truth but for prudential reasons one does not wish to force consciences. Nor can we describe Ficino’s attitude as relativistic. Ficino is not saying that all religions are equally true, equally valuable pathways to the divine; nor, certainly, is he following that other form of cultural relativism which says that the multiplicity of religions proves that they are all false. Nor again is his attitude ecumenical, in the sense of aiming at a single understanding of Christianity or at a single, unified world religion. His attitude is closer to what Charles Taylor has described as neo-Durkheimian, typified by American denominationalism. One believes one’s own religion, one thinks it stands closest to the truth. It is a guide and an avenue to authentic religious experiences. But one also respects other religious traditions, and even approves of them in a civic context as positive influences on the behavior of one’s fellow-citizens. One assumes that other religions enable valuable religious experiences, that they contain a form of religious wisdom; one may even come to the point of wanting to learn from other religions and to incorporate their insights into one’s own. It is an attitude of respect for and openness to other religious traditions, even if the principle in Ficino’s case (as in Cusanus’) is sometimes vitiated by intolerant outbursts against particular aspects of non-Christian religions, especially Judaism.³¹

³⁰ *Platonis opera*, trans. Marsilio Ficino (Venice, 1491), f. 300ra.

³¹ Charles Taylor, *Varieties of Religion Today* (Cambridge, MA, 2003), pp. 93–94.

Chapter 10 of the *Platonic Theology*, Book 14, is even more radically modern in the view it reveals of the religious condition of mankind. In this chapter Ficino is taking on—if I am not mistaken for the first time in the history of Christian apologetics—the materialistic etiology of religion found in Lucretius' *De rerum natura*. Lucretius, though not denying the existence of the gods, understands religious fear of the gods to be an irrational emotion having its source in ignorance and the weakness of human nature, reinforced by corrupt custom. Organized religions, especially those sponsored by the state or invented by primitive lawgivers, exploit these fears in order to coerce good behavior from wayward citizens. But a just view of nature, man and society such as Epicurus offered allows the philosopher to lay aside religious fear, as well as the psychic disturbances and other evils it causes, and to achieve tranquility.

Ficino responded to this primitive psychology of religion with a kind of psychology of irreligion, or perhaps one should call it a physiology of irreligion.³² For Ficino it is axiomatic that religion is natural to mankind, and a pious disposition is the natural product of balanced sanguine humors, or in other words of health and sanity. One might observe in passing that this view is perhaps not as unscientific as it might sound, and a number of evolutionary psychologists and anthropologists regard religious belief as a biological universal.³³ In any case, for Ficino it is unbelief that requires explanation, not belief. Ficino sees the unbelief characteristic of artists and intellectuals as the result of an excess of ratiocination, resulting in the predominance of the melancholic humor—dry, cold and black. “Such a humor,” writes Ficino, “being the contrary of life, banishes life’s hope and injects doubt, the enemy of life, into the rational soul.” Doubt is literally a disease of the soul, and it is this disease of depression or melancholy, sometimes exacerbated by astrological conditions, that is responsible for the irreligion of intellectuals. “They doubt, not because they excel in intellectual ability and doctrine, but because the earthy humor makes them doubtful and cowardly.”³⁴ The tendency of the melancholic humor to engender religious doubt in intellectuals was one reason, perhaps the chief reason, why Ficino

³² Compare Augustine, *De vera religione* 38.69; *In Joannis evangelium tractatus* 106.4; *Enarratio in Psalmos* 53.2; *De trinitate* 8.3.4.

³³ Steven Pinker, *The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial of Human Nature* (New York, 2002), appendix, and Pascal Boyer, *Religion Explained: The Evolutionary Origins of Religious Thought* (New York, 2001), especially chapter 1.

³⁴ Ficino, *Platonic Theology*, 14.10.5, eds. Allen-Hankins, 4:307.

devoted so large a part of his treatise on magic, the *De vita*, to combating this dangerous disposition to impiety.

In the course of his attack on Lucretius there emerges implicitly from Ficino's pages another figure, a contemporary of his, the Renaissance doubter. He is a young man, confident in his own powers of reasoning, disinclined to accept authority, always demanding a reason for everything, morally and constitutionally incapable of seeing the hidden metaphysical principles upon which religion rests. He is likely to be idle, licentious, flippant and a lover of the ridiculous—perhaps a Luigi Pulci or a Piero di Cosimo; perhaps even a Lorenzo de' Medici.³⁵ At a more advanced age he will be bitter, without hope, depressed and incurious. It is this sort of man that Ficino is urging not to give up on religion. Such a man should realize that the wisdom of religion is not going to be apparent to him until he has had more experience of life, until the riot of his passions has subsided with age, until he has trained himself morally and intellectually to receive higher truths that are not available to the *lumen siccum* of the pure rationalist. The contemplative life requires more than cleverness, more than the vigorous exercise of the brain; it is a spiritual discipline requiring faith, hope and charity. That spiritual discipline gives us a vision of the whole, a rich sense of the world's meaning from which an understanding of the divine can flow.

It is in this dialogue between the religious philosopher and the rationalist doubter that we can glimpse something of the modern condition in matters of religion. *Mutatis mutandis*, we might even see William James in his *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1903), a book now over a hundred years old, but still in print, a foundational text in the modern discipline of the psychology of religion, and a work described recently by Clifford Geertz as “still highly relevant to contemporary conditions.”³⁶ Here and in his essays on *The Will to Believe* (1897) James argued, in a way reminiscent of Ficino, against scientific rationalists (“humanists” as they would later be called in America) who regarded religion as simply irrational, sentimental balderdash, a thing of the past. James, by contrast, saw scientific rationalism as too *thin*, somehow, not capturing enough of the mystery of life, not addressing the deep questions. For those deeper questions, James thinks, we need religious answers, even if those answers cannot immediately withstand

³⁵ James Hankins, “Lorenzo de' Medici as a Student of Ficino: The *De summo bono*,” in *Humanism and Platonism*, 2: 317–50.

³⁶ Clifford Geertz, *Available Light* (Princeton, 2000), p. 185.

the rationalist's cross-examination. But James, like Ficino, feels the need to defend this suspense of one's critical faculties; he needs in other words to elaborate an ethics of belief. So James mounts a powerful argument that religion is a domain where belief is necessarily antecedent to grasping the truths of faith.

There are cases where a fact cannot come at all unless a preliminary faith exists in its coming. *And where faith in a fact can help create the fact*, that would be an insane logic which should say that faith running ahead of scientific evidence is the "lowest kind of immorality" into which a thinking being can fall. Yet such is the logic by which our scientific absolutists pretend to regulate our lives!³⁷

As interpreted by Charles Taylor, James is "building on the Augustinian insight that in certain domains love and self-opening enable us to understand what we would never grasp otherwise."³⁸ Taylor quotes Augustine's dictum in the *Contra Faustum* (32.18), *Non intratur in veritatem nisi per charitatem*, assimilating it to James' justification of his ethics of belief: "Better risk chance of error than loss of truth." Taylor's Augustinian parallel might tempt us to dismiss Ficino's engagement with religious skepticism as an eternal problem, not a distinctively modern one. Every age has its believers and its skeptics, one might claim; Augustine, Ficino and James were all engaged in a common, transhistorical dialogue between those who demand reasons before believing and those who think one must believe in order to understand.

Charles Taylor is an authoritative historian of philosophy as well as an eminent philosopher, and one hesitates to disagree with him. Yet it seems to me a mistake, an anachronism, to neglect the key differences between the Augustinian and the Jamesian projects. As an attentive reading of the *Confessions* I think shows, Augustine's belief that love or charity is the portal of truth is not tantamount to a belief in the necessity of a leap of faith. To be sure, grace and love guide the intellect to truth and allow the intellect to abide in truth. Certainly love gives stability to the truths of reason. But grace and love have no direct cognitive or pre-cognitive function. In his own path to Christianity Augustine already knew the truth intellectually before he committed his will to God; charity impelled his will to embrace a truth already known. Above all, Augustine's account of conversion has no concern specifically with the *ethics* of belief. He does not think of Christian

³⁷ William James, *Pragmatism and Other Writings*, ed. Giles Gunn (London, 2000), p. 214, emphasis in the original.

³⁸ Taylor, *Varieties of Religion Today*, p. 47.

faith as potentially compromising rationality; Christian teaching for him is a conclusion of reason.

In this respect, despite the innumerable other differences between Ficino and James, the Florentine philosopher is in James' world and not in Augustine's. It must of course be granted that what motivates Ficino's plea to suspend antecedent demands for proof in undertaking religious commitment is motivated by considerations quite different from the pragmatist motives invoked by James. Nevertheless, Ficino lives in the same atmosphere of religious doubt as James does. Ficino lived in a world of university intellectuals where the great majority of trained philosophers regarded Christian belief, for example the belief in the immortality of the soul, as incompatible with the most prestigious natural philosophy of the day, that of Aristotle as interpreted by Averroes and Alexander of Aphrodisias.³⁹ What gives Ficino's dialogue with the *Lucretiani*, *Epicurei* and other doubters its distinctively modern cast is precisely its focus on the psychology and ethics of belief—what causes someone to believe or disbelieve, and why one might ethically have an obligation to believe or not to believe. These were not themes that greatly exercised ancient or medieval thinkers, but they have become central problems for religious thinkers in a world where the scientific world-view and scientific method, on the one hand, and religious belief and religious modes of believing, on the other hand, appear to have parted ways. It is, I believe, a strong argument for the modernity of the Renaissance that such issues begin to be explored with ever greater intensity and sophistication by humanistic thinkers like Marsilio Ficino.

³⁹ See the famous passage in the preface to his Plotinus translation (*Opera omnia*, 2: 537) where Ficino states, with some exaggeration, that *totus ferme terrarum orbis* has been taken over by two sects of Aristotelians, the Averroists and the Alexandrians. On Ficino's quarrel with secularizing university intellectuals see my "Marsilio Ficino as a Critic of Scholasticism," in *Humanism and Platonism*, 2: 459–70.

RETHINKING “CHRISTIAN HUMANISM”

Charles G. Nauert

“Christian Humanism!” Paul Oskar Kristeller, one of the founders of the Renaissance Society of America, was cool to the use of this phrase. He liked to keep the concept of Renaissance humanism simple and unencumbered by ideological or speculative considerations. He pointed out the obvious fact that all humanists during the Renaissance were Christians. Yet Kristeller did admit that the term might be used to define a subtype consisting of “those scholars who explicitly discussed religious or theological problems in all or some of their writings.”¹ He still construed the term narrowly, excluding professional theologians like Aquinas or Luther but including not only Erasmus, Budé, More, and Hooker but also Calvin, Melancthon, and many post-Reformation Jesuits. Yet Kristeller’s definition is too cautious. This essay will assume that “Christian humanists” not only discussed religious or theological issues but also explicitly made a connection between their humanistic teaching and scholarship on classical languages and literature, on the one hand, and on the other hand, their study of ancient Christianity, including the Bible and the Church Fathers. Even more important, they associated their scholarly work (classical as well as biblical and patristic) with a determination to bring about a spiritual renewal and institutional reform of Christian society. That connection between their scholarly efforts and their longing for spiritual and institutional renewal is the specific characteristic that distinguishes “Christian humanists” as a group from other humanists who just happened to be religious.

By 1500, the culture of Renaissance Italy had begun to exert a powerful influence on Europe north of the Alps. Italian humanism passed along to northern Europe many achievements. One was linguistic: a more classical style of Latin and mastery of two languages, Greek and Hebrew, that had been little known in medieval Latin Christendom. Along with the languages came greater access to classical literature. By 1500, most of the major Latin authors had been made available in print. A century later,

¹ Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought* (New York, 1961), p. 86.

most of Greek classical and patristic literature had also been published, much of it in both Greek and Latin. In addition, a considerable body of classical literature had been published in vernacular translations. Even more important than such tangible influence, however, was the concept of Renaissance (cultural rebirth) itself, for humanists from the time of Petrarch (1304–74) had developed a characteristic outlook on the history of Europe and their own place in it. That view of history dismissed the medieval centuries as “barbarous” and professed a sublime if somewhat vague confidence that ancient civilization could be restored through the humanists’ own efforts to rediscover the heritage of antiquity.² Belief that a better world could be manufactured out of the literary remains of Greece and Rome shaped the mentality of the educated classes on both sides of the Alps. These developments led to demands for reform of schools and universities in order to give less attention to some subjects that had dominated medieval education (most notoriously, dialectic) and much more attention to classical languages and literatures.

The introduction of humanistic elements into the programs of schools and universities played out rather differently on the two sides of the Alps, partly for general cultural reasons but also because of the different institutional structures that developed in the two regions. Italian universities were primarily devoted to professional education in law and medicine, and students entered at a relatively mature age, so that most study of the humanities occurred before students came to the university. This pre-university education took place either in municipal Latin schools, where a humanistic curriculum replaced some traditional medieval subjects and textbooks by the second half of the fifteenth century, or in classes conducted by tutors or private schoolmasters. Paul Grendler described this transformation of fifteenth-century Italian schools as one of the few genuine revolutions in the history of Western education. While the revolutionary nature of this change has been challenged by Robert Black and other scholars who emphasize the continuity between late medieval and Renaissance education, even Black concedes that during the course of the fifteenth century, Italian grammar schools underwent significant change.³

² I attempted to summarize this theme in my own *Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 10–28, 34–41, 54–68; but the most telling historical account of the rise of the myth of the Renaissance is still Theodor E. Mommsen, “Petrarch’s Conception of the ‘Dark Ages,’” *Speculum* 17 (1942), 226–42, reprinted in his *Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, ed. Eugene F. Rice, Jr. (Ithaca, NY, 1959), pp. 106–29.

³ Paul F. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy* (Baltimore, 1989), pp. 117–41. Grendler

North of the Alps, boys often entered university at the age of 13 or 14 years, already equipped with some command of Latin but with most of their study of the basic liberal-arts subjects still to be undertaken in the faculty of arts; the degrees of bachelor and master of arts were normally required before a student could advance into one of the three higher faculties (theology, law, or medicine). These structural differences meant that in northern Europe, the introduction of humanistic subjects had to be fought out within the universities, which were largely autonomous, were ruled by their senior professors, and frequently resisted changes in the traditional educational program. Especially in Germany, the end of the fifteenth century and the first three or four decades of the sixteenth were marked by bitter struggles between traditionalists and humanists, though by the 1530s the humanist educational reformers had achieved most of their major goals.⁴

continued with his book on Italian universities, *The Universities of the Italian Renaissance* (Baltimore, 2002). For a dissenting view that locates the true revolution in Italian grammar-school education in the changes associated with the rise of universities in France and Italy during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, see Robert Black, *Humanism and Education in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge, 2001). Black stresses the continuities in Italian education from the twelfth century to the end of the fifteenth century. While he does not deny that Italian pre-university education underwent significant changes during the fifteenth century, he dates the major changes later (after 1450) than Grendler does and argues that even in 1500, many traditional elements persisted. He also insists that the changes around 1200 that led to the development of Latin grammar-schools in Italy were a far more revolutionary event than the later adaptation of the schools to the rising importance of classical or humanistic education. Grendler did not deny that many traditional medieval elements persisted in Italian grammar-schools even after 1500.

⁴ A useful though somewhat too benign account of these conflicts is James H. Overfield, *Humanism and Scholasticism in Late Medieval Germany* (Princeton, 1984); some of his conclusions are challenged by Erika Rummel, *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate in the Renaissance and Reformation* (Cambridge, MA, 1995). I have published several essays on this topic: "The Clash of Humanists and Scholastics: An Approach to Pre-Reformation Controversies," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 4 (1973), 1-18; "The Humanist Challenge to Medieval German Culture," *Daphnis: Zeitschrift für mittlere deutsche Literatur* 15 (1986): 277-306; "Humanist Infiltration into the Academic World: Some Studies of Northern Humanism," *Renaissance Quarterly* 43 (1990), 799-812, with bibliography, pp. 818-24; "Humanists, Scholastics, and the Struggle to Reform the University of Cologne, 1523-1525," in *Humanismus in Köln/Humanism in Cologne*, ed. James V. Mehl (Cologne, 1991), pp. 39-76; and most recently, "Humanism as Method: Roots of Conflict with the Scholastics," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 29 (1998), 427-38. The penetration of humanist learning into German university faculties of liberal arts did not always produce significant internal conflict. In many cases, the definitive victory of the humanist curricular reformers was the result of intervention by the territorial prince who was the patron and overlord of the university, usually but not always as one aspect of the ruler's decision to adopt the Evangelical religion. Yet humanist reformers had already introduced some degree of educational reform in several German universities, especially Erfurt and Wittenberg, before the Reformation began. German universities seem to have been unusually conflict-ridden. In England, the new learning was introduced into both universities more gradually and much more quietly. The official degree requirements

This interest in humanistic studies was unmistakably Italian in its origins,⁵ but each country took from Italy only what it found attractive. Humanism in northern Europe entered a spiritual milieu very different from Italy. Although many Italian humanists were deeply religious, Italian humanism in general had been secular. Its goal was to transform education, literature, and even political life; but it did not define a clear set of religious goals. Transalpine Europe had a very different culture—not necessarily more religious, but certainly religious in a different way. Before humanism could spread beyond a handful of individuals dazzled by contemporary Italy, it had to become something more than a literary enthusiasm. It had to become Christian. Late-medieval northern Europe had developed a number of popular movements seeking personal holiness and church reform. In order to flourish, northern humanism had to link

of the universities changed little (Cambridge) or almost not at all (Oxford), but humanism slipped in quietly through new lectures first introduced within the colleges, and still more quietly in the private interaction between undergraduates and collegiate tutors as the tutorial system became more and more central to the teaching of undergraduates (that is, students who were studying for degrees in the faculty of liberal arts). On this process, see James McConica, ed., *The Collegiate University*, vol. 3 of *The History of the University of Oxford*, ed. T.H. Aston (Oxford, 1986), especially chaps. 1 and 4 by McConica himself and chap. 4.1 by J.M. Fletcher; for Cambridge, Damian Riehl Leader, *The University to 1546*, vol. 1 of *A History of the University of Cambridge*, ed. C.N.L. Brooke (Cambridge, 1988), especially chaps. 11 and 12, pp. 233–319.

⁵ In the hypernationalistic atmosphere of Europe during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, some historians in northern Europe attempted to minimize or even to deny outright the Italian origin of the new learning, engaging in a search for native roots that would allow the author's nation to discover that its own Renaissance was the product of a pure and uncorrupted national tradition and that alien influence from across the Alps was minimal. Still valuable for details on these efforts is Wallace K. Ferguson, *The Renaissance in Historical Thought* (Boston, 1948), pp. 311–14, 316–28. For Germany and the Netherlands, influential efforts to identify native sources of an indigenous Renaissance were Paul Mestwerdt, *Die Anfänge des Erasmus: Humanismus und Devotio Moderna* (Leipzig, 1917) and Albert Hyma, *The Christian Renaissance* (New York, 1924; 2nd ed., with a new pt. 2 containing revisions, Hamden, CT, 1965). Both authors, but especially Hyma, pointed to the popular piety of the late-medieval North, especially the movement known as *Devotio Moderna*, as the source of a native and genuinely Christian Renaissance free of the supposedly irreligious spirit of the Italian Renaissance. Hyma's theories were very influential during the interwar years, but many of them were demolished by R.R. Post, *The Modern Devotion: Confrontation with Reformation and Humanism* (Leiden, 1968). Post's extremely long book is overwritten and under-edited, but his challenge to the claims of Mestwerdt and Hyma that the Dutch-German *Devotio Moderna* led in some direct way to the rise of humanism in northwestern Europe has held up despite criticisms expressed in A.G. Weiler, "The Dutch Brethren of the Common Life, Critical Theology, Northern Humanism and Reformation," in *Northern Humanism in European Context, 1469–1625: From the 'Adwert Academy' to Ubbo Emmius*, eds. F. Akkerman, A.J. Vanderjagt, and A.H. Van der Laan (Leiden, 1999), pp. 307–32.

its Italianate classical interests with reforms that addressed this longing for both personal spiritual renewal and reform of the church.

The earliest northern humanists had not been very spiritual. Peter Luder (1415–1472), the most influential of the so-called *Wanderpoeten* who began the introduction of humanism among educated Germans, spent about twenty years in Italy, studied humanities at Ferrara for a time under Guarino da Verona, and returned home in 1456, determined to make his mark by lecturing on the *studia humanitatis*.⁶ In his inaugural lecture at his own university, Heidelberg, he proclaimed his intention to rescue the Latin language from the prevailing "barbarism" (that is, the unclassical scholastic Latin that constituted the shop-talk of medieval academics) and to restore the language to the purity of ancient times. Luder had no trouble getting permission to lecture at a number of German universities and schools, but his stay at each of them was brief. He was able to win a permanent academic post only after he returned to Italy in 1462 and obtained a doctorate in medicine. He then settled in Basel as a lecturer on both poetry and medicine and also as town physician.

Luder's interests seem to have been strictly secular and classical, expounding the works of authors like Valerius Maximus, Horace, Seneca, Terence, and Ovid. The main cause of his need to move from place to place until he became a medical doctor was probably that even though there was a potential audience at each place for lectures on classical authors, few students could afford to spend much time and effort on classes that did not satisfy requirements for academic degrees. In addition, his reputation for drunkenness and for the love affairs that he celebrated in his own Latin poems probably contributed to his problems in winning regular academic employment. In any case, he was not much concerned with spiritual renewal.

The best-known German humanist in the closing decades of the century, Conrad Celtis (1459–1505), was more successful and more influential.⁷ As a student at Heidelberg, he attended lectures by the ablest of the early German humanists, Rudolf Agricola. He was also able to begin the study of

⁶ For a useful brief sketch of his career and references to literature on him and other *Wanderpoeten*, see Eckhard Bernstein, *German Humanism* (Boston, 1983), pp. 12–16.

⁷ The standard English-language study is still Lewis Spitz, *Conrad Celtis* (Cambridge, MA, 1957); there is also a chapter on Celtis in Spitz's later book *The Religious Renaissance of the German Humanists* (Cambridge, MA, 1963). In German, see the lengthy article by Dieter Wuttke, "Conrad Celtis Protucius" in *Deutsche Dichter der frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Stephan Fussel (Berlin, 1993), pp. 173–99.

Greek there. He completed his M.A. degree in 1485 and then taught poetry at several universities. In 1486 he published his first book, *Ars versificandi et carminum*. From about 1487 he spent two years in Italy, where he met Marsilio Ficino and the Roman humanist and antiquarian Pomponio Leto. He moved to Krakow in 1489 to study mathematics and astronomy. In 1492 he secured an appointment at the University of Ingolstadt. His inaugural lecture there was a manifesto proclaiming his goal of capturing cultural leadership from the Italians. He staked Germany's claim to a glorious historical past of its own, lecturing on Tacitus and publishing an edition of Tacitus' *Germania*, a classical work that glorified the ancient Germans. He also discovered and published the Latin dramas by the tenth-century German nun Hroswitha, further evidence that German learning had long historical roots. In 1473, the Emperor Frederick III crowned him poet laureate, mainly on the strength of his *Ars versificandi*. The most striking trait of his publications was his German patriotism, expressed not only in his editions of Tacitus and Hroswitha and in his call for German students to seize cultural leadership from the Italians but also in his proposal for a great literary portrait of their fatherland and its history, which he called *Germania illustrata*. The project was far too ambitious for him to fulfill, but in 1503 he published a sample, his *Norimberga*, a remarkable portrait of one of the country's major cities.

Celtis was a promoter by nature; and perhaps his greatest contribution to German humanism was his ability to organize local and regional societies for the study and discussion of Latin literature. These regional sodalities constituted an interlocking network of humanists and educated urban patricians who exchanged literary news, read each other's publications, and fostered the spread of humanist learning throughout Germany. In the very earliest period of the Protestant Reformation, this network played a crucial role in the rapid spread of a favorable image of Martin Luther among the educated classes.⁸

Of course Celtis, who died in 1507, was no promoter of the Reformation. His primary goal was to glorify his native country by inspiring his students to assert the greatness of their nation's past and to contribute through their learning to its cultural advancement. The shrewd Habsburg emperor Maximilian recognized in the patriotic zeal of Celtis' young disciples a

⁸ Bernd Moeller, "The German Humanists and the Beginnings of the Reformation," in *Imperial Cities and the Reformation: Three Essays*, eds. and trans. H.C. Erik Midelfort and Mark U. Edwards, Jr., (Durham, NC, 1982), pp. 19–38; originally published in German in *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, 4. Folge, 8 (1959), 46–61.

force that he could mobilize in support of his own dynastic and political goals. In 1497 he appointed Celtis professor of poetry at Vienna. In 1501 he authorized Celtis to form a special humanistic institute, the College of Poets and Mathematicians, intended to prepare students of the humanities to become supporters of imperial policies. Celtis was also a talented Latin poet. His *Quattuor libri amorum* (1502) was a partly fictitious poetic celebration of four different regions of Germany in which he had lived and also of the romantic affairs, real or imaginary, that he had carried on in each of those places. Celtis was a far more influential and successful promoter of humanism than Luder or any of the other *Wanderpoeten*. Yet the humanism that he promoted was still little more than a literary movement affecting a small literary elite. None of Celtis' publications suggests the slightest connection between the literary activities of humanists and the cause of spiritual renewal. His own poems reflected the erotic spirit and stylistic elegance of the Roman lyric poetry that he admired.

A far more intellectually formidable figure was the Frisian scholar Rudolf Agricola (1444–1485). Educated at Erfurt, Cologne, and Louvain, by 1469 he had moved to Pavia to study law. There his interest in humanistic studies overcame his interest in law, and he abandoned legal studies for literature. By 1475 he was at the University of Ferrara, which had a strong tradition of interest in humanistic studies, continued in Agricola's time by Battista Guarini, son of the university's first famous teacher, Guarino of Verona. Battista was probably the source of Agricola's proficiency in Greek, a rare attainment among German humanists of his generation.⁹

In 1479 Agricola returned home to Frisia. That same year he produced his major work, a comprehensive manual of rhetoric, *De inventione dialectica*, which circulated among his friends but was not published until 1515, a generation after the author's death. He found employment as secretary to the city of Groningen. Compared to the rich cultural life of Ferrara, Frisia seemed like a remote Libyan desert, "unmarked by any trace of human culture, for here with us there is no-one who takes delight in letters. . . ."¹⁰ This was an exaggeration. The area around Groningen was inhabited by a number of learned men, and Agricola seems to have found intellectual company at Groningen itself and especially at the near-by Cistercian abbey of Aduard, where a fluctuating

⁹ Jozef IJsewijn, "Agricola as Greek Scholar," in *Rodolphus Agricola Phrisius, 1444–1485*, ed. F. Akkerman and A.J. Vanderjagt (Leiden, 1988), pp. 21–37.

¹⁰ Quoted by F. Akkerman, "Agricola and Groningen," in *Rodolphus Agricola Phrisius*, pp. 3–20, quotation at p. 4.

circle of scholars gathered to discuss both sacred and secular literature. Agricola found his official duties as Latin secretary more demanding than he had anticipated. He considered offers to become headmaster of the Latin school in Antwerp and to become secretary and tutor at the Burgundian court of Maximilian of Habsburg, but he rejected both offers because they would leave him little time for study. In 1482, he accepted an invitation from the Elector of the Palatinate, arranged by the ruler's adviser Johann von Dalberg, bishop of Worms and chancellor of both the principality and the local university. Here he had full time for his studies, with the option of lecturing at the university. His reputation for mastery of the Greek language and classical literature had preceded him, and ambitious young humanists came when he offered lectures, including the young Conrad Celtis. Agricola also undertook the study of Hebrew. In 1485 he accompanied Bishop Dalberg to represent the Elector at the consecration of Pope Innocent VIII in Rome. On the return trip, however, he fell seriously ill and died a few days after reaching Heidelberg. Agricola was a competent Hellenist. He translated several Greek works into Latin, including the dialogue *Axiochus*, which was then attributed to Plato, published at Deventer in 1480 and frequently reprinted. He also translated several other brief texts from Greek. His *De formando studio*, a letter advising a friend on how to plan a good education, was frequently republished. Other surviving works include a collection of his orations and a Latin poem in honor of St. Anne, the legendary mother of the Virgin Mary. Of particular interest is his brief life of Petrarch, whom he praised as the first important figure of the great revival of learning. Though interesting as evidence of his connection of his own learning with the achievements of the first famous Italian humanist, this biographical sketch remained unprinted until 1924 and so could not have influenced Renaissance intellectuals.¹¹

Agricola's most important work, however, was *De inventione dialectica*. Its existence was known among his admirers. Several of them made an effort to locate a copy, and in 1515, an edition of most of the book was published at Louvain. A more complete text appeared in 1539, and both versions were frequently reprinted. *De inventione* was one of the most influential books of sixteenth-century Northern humanism. Use of it in place of traditional medieval manuals of dialectic was one of the principal demands of the

¹¹ On Agricola's biography of Petrarch, see Eckhard Kessler, "Agricola und die Geschichte," in *Rodolphus Agricola Phrisius*, pp. 58–59.

humanist curricular reformers in northern (especially German) universities. Its tardy publication, however, makes it essentially a sixteenth-century book and hence not a factor in the origin of Christian humanism.

Agricola's rather scanty literary production dealt mostly with secular topics: dialectic and rhetoric, Platonic philosophy, humanistic education, and translations of, or commentaries on, classical authors. Agricola seems to have led a more pious and orderly life than rough pioneers like Luder or self-aggrandizing careerists like Celtis. Some of his writings show interest in religious topics. His decision to begin the study of Hebrew may reflect an intention to undertake scholarly study of the Bible, but there is no evidence that he attempted to apply his mastery of Greek to study of the New Testament. He left a vivid impression on the memories of those who knew him, including Erasmus, who as a twelve-year-old student in Deventer heard him as a guest lecturer and friend of the headmaster, Alexander Hegius. But Agricola seems never to have linked his considerable erudition to the cause of spiritual renewal or institutional reform. Lewis Spitz remarked on the lack of any sense of discontent with religious conditions or any tendency to promote reform of the church.¹²

The other major leader of German humanism at the turn of the sixteenth century, Johann Reuchlin (1455–1522), did associate his remarkable scholarly achievements with religion, but in an idiosyncratic form contrary to the direction taken by Christian humanism. Although he had a conventional university education at Freiburg (1470–72) and Basel (1474–77), he spent 1473 in Paris as tutor to a German prince. There he attended lectures by the leading French humanist of his time, Robert Gaguin. In addition, he found former students of one of the earliest Italian humanists to teach Greek at Paris, Gregorio Tifernate, who were able to help him begin the study of Greek. After completing his B.A. and M.A. degrees (1477) at Basel, he returned to Paris and spent at least a year studying under a native Greek, Georgius Hermonymus of Sparta. In 1479, however, he began the study of law at Orléans and then at Poitiers, receiving the licentiate in 1481. Although his study of Greek defines him as a humanist, he made his career in the law, and prospered as legal adviser to German princes and later as a judge.

Reuchlin's unofficial career as a humanist was even more distinguished than his legal one. He made three trips to Italy (1482, 1490, and 1498) on diplomatic service. On the first of these, he met Lorenzo de' Medici and

¹² Spitz, *Religious Renaissance*, pp. 36–37.

his son Giovanni, the future Pope Leo X. He also met leading Italian intellectuals, including Marsilio Ficino and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola at Florence, the Venetian humanist Ermolao Barbaro, and the scholar-printer Aldus Manutius. He found the Neoplatonic and cabalistic interests of Ficino and Pico attractive, and probably because of their influence he undertook the study of Hebrew, initially under an unidentified tutor and then during extended diplomatic missions, at Linz in 1492 and at Rome in 1498.¹³

Most of Reuchlin's publications were typically humanistic: a Latin dictionary, which was frequently reprinted, and Latin translations of Greek works by St. Athanasius, Demosthenes, Hippocrates, and Homer. More unusual but still work that a well-qualified humanist might undertake were his two contributions to the study of Hebrew, *De rudimentis Hebraicis* (1506), the first successful Hebrew grammar-book for Latin-speaking students, and a more specialized work, *De accentibus et orthographia linguae hebraicae* (1518). He wrote two Latin comedies, *Scaenica progymnasmata*, or *Henno*, which was staged in 1497 and printed in 1498, and *Sergius*, which was never put on the stage, probably because of its sharp criticism of popular devotion to religious relics and of the monastic orders that promoted and profited from such devotions. It was printed, however, in 1504. He also published a tract on preaching (1504) and one of his own ambassadorial orations (1498). Nearly all of these works were secular in content. His second comedy, *Sergius*, reflects dissatisfaction with the materialistic elements in popular religion and with the way in which the monastic orders exploited credulous people. Such criticism of contemporary religion was by no means unusual for the period. Reuchlin seems to have been a devout and mostly traditional late-medieval Catholic. From the end of 1517, when Martin Luther's theses on indulgences began to attract attention, Reuchlin distanced himself from the Saxon Reformer, at a time when most German humanists expressed at least some sympathy; and his opposition remained firm, even at the cost of a bitter and permanent break with his own great-nephew and protégé Philipp Melanchthon, whom he had sent to Wittenberg in 1518 as that university's first professor of Greek.

Yet his Hebrew studies were not exclusively humanistic or linguistic. His goal in studying Hebrew was not philological; it was religious. His acquaintance with Pico della Mirandola convinced him that mastery of the Jewish mystical texts known as the Cabala would open up to Christian scholars not just a better understanding of the Hebrew Bible but also a new way of

¹³ Cecil Roth, *The Jews in the Renaissance* (New York, 1959), p. 128.

understanding divine revelation. Like Pico and Ficino, he believed in the *prisca theologia*, 'ancient theology', a body of religious truth revealed by God not just to the ancient Hebrews but also to the founders of each of the ancient religious traditions. His two dialogues on the Cabala, *De verbo mirifico* (1494) and the more knowledgeable *De arte cabalistica* (1517), prove that he viewed the Cabala as exegetical sources that would provide new insight into the hidden meaning of Scripture. Like much of the other literature of the "ancient theology," the cabalistic tracts presented a theosophy, a body of religious wisdom, that was revealed only to the enlightened few who had both the necessary intellectual ability and the moral character that ensured that they would not misuse the religious insight and material power available through mastery of this secret learning. Cabalistic treatises were intended only for insiders and must be kept away from the unenlightened masses who would misunderstand and misuse them. Like nearly all Christian cabalists, Reuchlin claimed that cabalistic learning would enrich Christian religion and would demonstrate from the Jews' own religious books that Jesus was the Messiah and that the longstanding claim of Christianity to represent the fulfillment of Jewish revelation was valid.

In one sense, Reuchlin's cabalistic dialogues represent an application of humanistic learning to the promotion of Christian religion. They seem related to Christian humanism. Yet his thought leads in a very different direction. His cabalistic learning is esoteric, directed solely toward the enlightenment and empowerment of a small group of special souls who possess the intellectual, moral, and spiritual superiority that makes them worthy of a more profound religious experience. It is insider knowledge, not something intended to bring about the spiritual regeneration of the whole Christian community, and certainly not something concerned with institutional corruption, worldliness, and clerical exploitation of simple believers. The underlying esotericism of Reuchlin's Christian cabalism is in fact a rejection of the call for Christian renewal that found expression in genuine Christian humanism. This evaluation has been most fully developed by the historian Charles Zika. According to him, Reuchlin's goal was a kind of liturgical magic that would grant spiritual insight (and material power) to enlightened cabalists who knew how to use cabalistic methods to derive and make use of angelic names concealed under the Hebrew text of the Bible. Zika argues that during the last quarter-century of his life, Reuchlin abandoned genuine humanism and conceived a religious reform expressed in "the esoteric practices of initiates" rather than in the ethical and moral reform sought by Erasmus and his followers. His Christian cabalism embraced precisely the kind of ritualistic and ceremonial element

that humanists like Erasmus found offensive in contemporary popular religion.¹⁴

Thus far, this study has concentrated on German humanists active during the late fifteenth century. Yet a brief look at leading French and English humanists of the period 1470–1510 reveals the development of a similar secular humanism that implied no program of spiritual renewal and institutional reform of the church through humanistic scholarship.

The earliest French humanism, like its German counterpart, was imported from Italy and shows a predominantly secular orientation—not in any proper sense anti-religious, but not, as a movement, responding to the call for a general spiritual and ecclesiastical renewal. The first important figure in Parisian humanism was Guillaume Fichet (1433 to after 1490). He was a native of Savoy and had received his liberal-arts education at the papal university in Avignon before coming to Paris to study theology. He seems devoid of any idea of linking his interest in classical authors to a campaign for spiritual renewal. As a doctoral candidate and then a member of the faculty of theology in an overwhelmingly traditional university, he devoted the usual instructional hours in the morning to teaching scholastic theology. Then in the evening, he presented unofficial lectures on classical authors.

Fichet is most famous because he was one of the two Paris theologians involved in the founding of the first French printing press. He and the German-born prior of the Sorbonne, Johann Heynlin von Stein, established three German printers in the buildings of the Sorbonne itself. But the new press was not primarily spiritual or even theological in its direction. In the first three years, nearly all of its products were either works by recent Italian humanists or texts of ancient authors. The first book printed in France was the *Epistolae* of the humanist Gasparino Barzizza. The second was the same author's *Orthographia*, to which were appended Guarino Guarini's *On Diphthongs* and Heynlin's own treatise on punctuation. Both books came out in 1470. The third product was the *Opera* of Sallust (1471), followed by editions of Florus, Valerius Maximus, Cicero's *De officiis*, and Lorenzo Valla's *Elegantiae*, an almost totally humanistic production, interrupted only by one patristic edition and two works of scholastic theology.¹⁵ The press

¹⁴ Charles Zika, "Reuchlin and Erasmus: Humanism and Occult Philosophy," *Journal of Religious History* 4 (June, 1977), 223–46. The quoted passages appear at pp. 232 and 238.

¹⁵ Rudolf Hirsch, "Printing in France and Humanism," in *French Humanism, 1470–1600*, ed. Werner Gundersheimer (London, 1969), pp. 113–30, especially pp. 116–18. Augustin

also published Fichet's own *Rhetorica* (1471), a work that was primarily traditional and scholastic rather than humanistic. Fichet had become a friend of the Greek-born Cardinal Johannes Bessarion, and in 1472 he accompanied Bessarion back from Paris to Rome, where he became a curial official and remained for the rest of his life.

Fichet's departure left his friend Robert Gaguin (1423?–1501) as the leading figure in the small community of humanists at Paris. Gaguin had supplied an introductory letter for the 1470 edition of Barzizza's *Orthographia*. A native of northern France, he entered a convent of the Trinitarian order at an early age and, no later than May 1451, came to study at Paris. While a student in the faculty of arts, he seems to have been attracted to humanistic subjects, but he did not take an arts degree, moving directly into the faculty of canon law. He may have studied under the Italian humanist Gregorio Tifernate, who taught both Latin prosody and Greek language; he certainly attended the lectures on classical authors given by Fichet, who became his close friend. After Fichet's move to Rome, Gaguin began offering his own lectures on classical literature, given at his own convent.

Both the teaching and the legal studies of Gaguin were frequently interrupted by his rise to a leading position in the Trinitarian order. As a monk, he traveled in Spain, Italy, and Germany. In 1473 he was elected general of the entire order, and he also became head of the order's convent at Paris. From about 1477 the French government sent him on diplomatic missions to Germany, Italy, and England. He finally completed his *licence* and doctorate in canon law in 1480, nearly thirty years after he entered the university as a young monk. He served several terms as dean of the faculty of canon law, and he frequently represented the university on ceremonial occasions and also in legal conflicts with secular authorities. He had become an important person.

Gaguin's interest in humanistic and classical literature went back to his time as a student in the faculty of arts. He knew Filippo Beroaldo during the Italian humanist's brief period of teaching in Paris; he corresponded with Marsilio Ficino and with the German humanist and abbot Trithemius of Sponheim; he met the Alsatian humanist Jakob Wimpfeling while traveling in Germany. His most famous humanistic friendship was with the young Erasmus, who by 1495 had become one of the many humanist poets who

Renaudet, *Préréforme et humanisme à Paris pendant les premières guerres d'Italie (1494–1517)*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1953), pp. 83–85, remains indispensable even though it first appeared in 1916. See also Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, *L'Apparition du livre* (Paris, 1958), pp. 267–69.

gathered in the French capital to seek patrons and literary recognition. In 1495, when Gaguin published his major literary work, *Compendium de origine et gestis Francorum*, he invited Erasmus to fill a blank page at the end with a letter endorsing the book. This letter was Erasmus' first appearance in print. Gaguin also advised and encouraged Erasmus in his early literary efforts.

Gaguin's biography demonstrates that he was a devout monk, a kind person who went out of his way to help aspiring younger humanists. But his literary works show no hint that he perceived a direct connection between his scholarly career and any program of spiritual renewal. With a few minor exceptions, his literary publications were as secular as his monastic work was religious. His first publication, *Ars metrificandi* (1473), dealt with Latin prosody. He translated a number of classical Latin texts into French, of which the most important was his version of Caesar's *Commentaries*, made in 1485 at the request of King Charles VIII and printed at Paris a few years later. His major work, the Latin history of the Franks, was warmly patriotic—so much so that it elicited angry reactions from Englishmen like Thomas More and John Skelton. A recent study of his historical work has noted his keen awareness of the historical significance of the new art of printing. Nearly everything he wrote had been printed before his death in 1501.¹⁶ Despite his piety and his engagement in humanistic activities, there is no evidence that he connected the two; he offered no program for a comprehensive regeneration of religion and society through humanistic scholarship.

Much the same generalization is true of the leading figures of early English humanism, with the single exception of John Colet.¹⁷ Thomas

¹⁶ Franck Collard, *Un historien au travail à la fin du XV^e siècle: Robert Gaguin* (Geneva, 1996), pp. 70–71.

¹⁷ The crucial figures discussed below are, in order of age, William Grocyn, Thomas Linacre, and William Latimer. Grocyn and Linacre receive only passing mention toward the end of the influential survey of early English humanism by Roberto Weiss, *Humanism in England During the Fifteenth Century*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1957), which ends with the accession of Henry VII in 1485. Weiss does cover the early period of Grocyn's career, before his departure for Italy (p. 173). He occasionally mentions Linacre. His account of the earliest humanists in England, from about 1420 to 1485, covers a generation of scholars for whom humanism involved little more than interest in the study of classical Latin literature; even an interest in Greek (though not totally absent) was a rarity. James K. McConica, *English Humanists and Reformation Politics under Henry VIII and Edward VI* (Oxford, 1965), gives more attention to Grocyn and Linacre (but again not to William Latimer) since the emphasis of his book is on the period of the Henrician and Edwardian Reformation, when the government exploited humanistic learning in support of its re-

Linacre (c. 1460–1524) had impeccable humanistic credentials. After study at Oxford, he spent the years 1488–90 in Florence studying Greek with Demetrius Chalcondyles and Angelo Poliziano. Two other English humanists, William Grocyn and William Latimer, as well as young Giovanni de' Medici, were his fellow-students. Linacre next moved to Padua, where he completed a doctorate in medicine in 1496, and then was one of the young humanists who assisted the Venetian publisher Aldus Manutius with the first edition of the Greek text of Aristotle (1495–98). After his return to England in 1499, Aldus published his Latin translation of the astronomical work *Sphaera*, then attributed to Proclus. Linacre established himself as a leading London physician, becoming personal physician to King Henry VIII in 1509. His skill as a Hellenist was recognized at home and abroad, but his publications were mainly medical and scientific. Although he was a friend of John Colet, Thomas More, Erasmus, and other leaders of Christian humanism in England, there is no apparent link between his work as a humanist and any movement for spiritual renewal.

Of Linacre's English fellow-students at Florence, the elder, William Grocyn (c.1446–1519), who had completed his M.A. degree by 1474 and left Oxford in order to spend three years in Italy, was universally praised for his command of Greek, his familiarity with classical literature, and his excellent library; but he seems to have avoided authorship at all costs. He took a baccalaureate in theology soon after returning to Oxford in 1491 and then began the first regular series of lectures on Greek ever offered at Oxford. In 1496 he was appointed rector of a church in London, and eventually he spent most of his time in the capital. In London he taught Greek to the young humanists Thomas More and Richard Croke. Although generally conservative on religious matters, in 1501 he gave a course of lectures at St. Paul's in which he rejected the traditional ascription of the patristic book *De hierarchia ecclesiastica* to the Athenian philosopher Dionysius who was converted by the Apostle Paul (Acts 17:34). Potentially, this was a bold conclusion, for the reputed authorship by the Dionysius mentioned in the New

ligious policies. In general, the literature on all three humanists discussed here consists mostly of scattered references in works devoted to other topics. The exception is Linacre, mainly on account of his importance in medicine. On him, see Francis Maddison et al., eds., *Essays on the Life and Works of Thomas Linacre* (Oxford, 1977). There are useful but brief sketches of all three humanists in *Contemporaries of Erasmus: A Biographical Register*, eds. Peter G. Bietenholz and Thomas B. Deutscher, 3 vols. (Toronto, 1985–87), 2:135–36 on Grocyn, 302–3 on Latimer, and 331–32 on Linacre. On Linacre, see also the brief entry by Stanford D. Lehmborg in *Encyclopedia of the Renaissance*, ed. Paul F. Grendler, 6 vols. (New York, 1999), 3:427.

Testament had given the works of the pseudo-Dionysius an almost scriptural authority; but Grocyn did not pursue the subject or relate his conclusions to any reform initiatives. He appears to have been both a pious Christian and a rather passive supporter of humanistic studies, but aside from his brief fling with textual criticism in the case of pseudo-Dionysius, there is no evidence that he made a connection between his humanist interests and any program of spiritual renewal and ecclesiastical reform.

Linacre's second English fellow-student at Florence was William Latimer (c.1460–1545), who influenced a number of younger English humanists. He was a well-beneficed clergyman and also a dutiful one who actually resided in his parish. In 1531 he received a baccalaureate in theology from Oxford. He corresponded with Italian scholars whom he had known in Italy, but, aside from a few letters preserved in the correspondence of Erasmus, not a single word of any writings has survived. He seems to have turned away from scholarly study in his later years and to have concentrated on his duties as a parish priest. Despite his fine education, he was no more than a friend of the real leaders of Christian humanism.

In the years just before 1500, however, a handful of influential humanists began seeking to bring about a reform of the church and a revival of spiritual life through humanistic education. Such an education would combine the spirit of the best pre-Christian moral philosophers, such as Cicero and Seneca, with a more specifically Christian inspiration derived from the early Church Fathers and the Bible. An early if somewhat timid pioneer of this desire to reorient humanistic learning was the Alsatian humanist Jakob Wimpfeling (1450–1528). A man of limited intellect and provincial outlook, he was by turns vehement and timid. He complained bitterly about the corrupt nature of ecclesiastical patronage and the moral deficiencies of many clergymen. Yet whenever he reached the point of moving from complaint to action, he drew back for fear of controversy. He loved the ancient Latin classics (or at least some of them) and yet worried about exposing Christian students to pagan literature, favoring instead the study of the Latin Church Fathers and a handful of Christian poets who lived in the late Roman Empire. Nevertheless, Wimpfeling seems to be one of the first Northern humanists who clearly saw that improved education of lay and clerical elites could initiate a gradual improvement in the condition of Christendom. He wanted a new kind of education that would create future leaders of church and state who had been carefully educated both in earnest practice of Christian religion and in a new school curriculum based on the writings of ancient Christian authors and a select few of the best classical authors. He published a number of works on education, including

Isidoneus Germanicus (1496), a guidebook for the schooling of German youth; *Adolescentia* (1500), by far the most influential of his educational works; and *Germania* (1501), which is mainly an unsuccessful attempt to persuade the city council of Strasbourg to found a humanistic school for the proper education of local boys.¹⁸

Wimpfeling's English contemporary John Colet (1467–1519) was an abler and more cosmopolitan person and considerably more successful in exerting influence on the cultural development of his country. He had the advantage of being extremely rich and having close connections to the close-knit elite that ruled early Tudor England. Unlike Wimpfeling, Colet studied in Italy, was strongly attracted to the Neoplatonic philosophers Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola, and returned home determined to promote humanistic studies in England and to make a public issue of the corruption and unworthiness of many church officials. Colet gained a partial (but limited) appreciation of the humanist method of close textual explication of literary texts, and in public lectures at Oxford just before the turn of the century, he applied this technique to the Epistles of St. Paul. He never realized, however, the crucial role that mastery of Greek must play in any comprehensive application of humanism to biblical studies.

Though harshly critical of unworthy bishops and priests, Colet had no inclination to reject orthodox doctrine. After completing a doctorate in theology at Oxford in 1505, he obtained the influential position of dean of St. Paul's cathedral. As dean, Colet used his large personal fortune to found a school for boys at the cathedral, recruiting distinguished humanists to recommend textbooks or even, as in the case of his Dutch friend Erasmus, to compose new textbooks for his school. The new St. Paul's was in some respects a humanistic school, especially in its goal of teaching good Latin and providing a sound academic and moral preparation for boys who were

¹⁸ Wimpfeling in many respects was a limited and very provincial man, and recent historians have not found him very attractive for study. The standard biography, dated in many respects but still indispensable, is Joseph Knepper, *Jakob Wimpfeling: Sein Leben und seine Werke* (Freiburg-im-Breisgau, 1902). Even older but also still useful is Charles Schmidt, *Histoire littéraire de l'Alsace à la fin du XV^e et au commencement du XVI^e siècle*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1871). The essay on Wimpfeling in Richard Newald, *Probleme und Gestalten des deutschen Humanismus* (Berlin, 1963), pp. 346–68, is more a character-sketch than a biography or intellectual analysis. The best overview available in English is the chapter devoted to Wimpfeling in Spitz, *Religious Renaissance of the German Humanists*, pp. 41–60. Also helpful is the section on Wimpfeling in Bernstein, *German Humanism*, pp. 29–39. There is more recent literature on his involvement in the humanist-scholastic controversies of the period and on the political and social significance of his Alsatian patriotism, but these topics are not relevant here.

intended to become (and in many cases did become) leaders of both church and state. Yet Colet was as narrow and opinionated as he was intelligent and energetic; and his statutes for the school show a pronounced anticlassical bias. They specified in no uncertain terms just which books should be taught: the new Latin grammar and other textbooks that he had commissioned, the best Christian authors of ancient times, such as the patristic author Lactantius and the poet Prudentius. But only a handful of pagan authors were allowed, mainly Cicero and Virgil because their Latin was so good and their works expressed the highest moral values attainable in a pre-Christian world. The amorous lyric poets such as Horace and Ovid and Martial were prohibited. This strange, almost anti-humanistic humanist curriculum was so unrealistic that from an early date, the headmasters quietly subverted the founder's restrictions. After the death of Colet and his hand-picked headmaster, William Lily, St. Paul's gradually developed into an influential humanistic school that promoted the new learning.¹⁹

While Wimpfeling and Colet remained suspicious of classical literature, the real leaders of Northern humanism were creating an explicitly Christian movement that embraced study of both pagan and Christian antiquity and the mastery of ancient languages as a means to achieve both religious reform and the formation of a more just, more peaceable, and better educated secular society. Although Wimpfeling and Colet were precursors in some respects, the true inventors of this fully developed Christian humanism were the French humanist Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples (c.1453–1536) and the Dutch humanist Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam (1467?–1536). What none of the earlier Northern humanists had achieved was a way of integrating admiration for ancient civilization with efforts to recapture the inner spirit of ancient Christianity. Both Lefèvre and Erasmus wanted to bring about a spiritual renewal that would be nourished by Scripture and the works of the Church Fathers but also by the noblest elements of classical thought. Their personal lives followed very different directions, and ultimately Erasmus became the more widely influential. But Lefèvre's emergence as an explicitly Christian humanistic scholar occurred slightly earlier, and his impact on the intellectual and religious life of France was more direct.

¹⁹ John Gleason, *John Colet* (Berkeley, 1989), pp. 217–24, provides a succinct and well-informed discussion of the foundation and nature of St. Paul's school. On Colet's goal of using the school as a means of educating a more competent and more Christian ruling elite in the next generation, see p. 224; on the bias against most pagan authors and the extreme conservatism of the program of studies as originally laid down by Colet, see pp. 225–28.

Lefèvre received a traditional education at the most famous center of the scholastic intellectual tradition, the University of Paris. From 1480 to 1508, he taught the liberal arts in one of the Paris colleges. But he became interested in the new cultural developments in Italy and began studying Greek privately under the exiled Greek scholar Georgius Hermonymus. At Paris Lefèvre taught the subject known as "humanities," a term that included ancient Latin literature. His first truly innovative step, however, involved Aristotle, whose works had been at the center of liberal-arts education at all universities since the thirteenth century. Lefèvre was especially interested in the *Metaphysics*, and his first scholarly work was an introduction to that text which, in typical humanist fashion, ignored the vast medieval literature of commentaries. He produced a number of other introductory treatises on philosophical works of Aristotle, demonstrating a knack for simplified but helpful exposition of difficult philosophical texts. He was also interested in mathematical and astronomical texts, both ancient and medieval. Lefèvre was a deeply religious man, and on at least two occasions, he seriously considered entering a monastery.

Beginning in 1491–92, Lefèvre made three trips to Italy in order to study its flourishing philosophical culture. He met the Venetian humanist Ermolao Barbaro, a student of the Greek texts of Aristotle, who encouraged him to work for improvement in the teaching of Aristotle at Paris. He also met the two principal figures of Florentine Neoplatonic philosophy, Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola, whose interests included Jewish Cabalism, Hermetic literature, and other fringe elements of ancient philosophy. Although Lefèvre found Plato and his ancient Neoplatonic disciples fascinating, upon his return to Paris he set to work on Barbaro's project of improving the teaching of Aristotle. He promoted the substitution of recent Latin translations of Aristotle, derived from the Greek text, for the often-deficient, and certainly unclassical, medieval Latin versions; and he focused his own teaching on the text of Aristotle himself rather than on the medieval commentaries that Parisian tradition had emphasized. As time passed, his interest shifted more and more to the writings of the Greek Church Fathers. Because these authors lived closer to the age of the Apostles, their theology seemed a better guide to spiritual life than the speculative and rationalistic theology of medieval scholasticism. Among medieval authors, the mystical and spiritual writers seemed more appealing than the professional theologians; and Lefèvre and his disciples published editions of such works and also of patristic authors.

Lefèvre's overriding goal was not the advancement of theological learning but the regeneration of contemporary spiritual life. About 1508 he retired

from teaching and spent the rest of his life engaged in textual scholarship and efforts to promote reform of the church. In this period Lefèvre turned increasingly to study of the Bible. In 1509 he published *Quincuplex Psalterium/Fivefold Psalter*, an edition of five different Latin texts of the Psalms, three of them being older than the Vulgate text commonly used in the medieval church. He hoped that study of the textual variations would stimulate reflection on the deeper meaning of these sacred writings. In 1512 he published the Vulgate text of the Epistles of St. Paul, accompanied by his own new Latin translation containing corrections based on a Greek manuscript of the New Testament, and by his own commentary. These biblical publications constitute the first major manifestation of the Christian humanism that dominated not only French but also German, Netherlandish, and English humanistic thought through the first half of the sixteenth century. Lefèvre's scriptural editions attracted attention not only in France but also in Germany and Switzerland, though this influence was eclipsed in 1516 when Erasmus published the first edition of his Greek New Testament.

What is particularly striking is Lefèvre's gradual transformation from a scholastic teacher with some interest in humanism to a humanistic reformer of Aristotelian studies and natural philosophy, and then on to concern with patristic and medieval mystical authors, the Church Fathers, and finally with exegesis of the text of Scripture itself. Between 1509 and 1512 Lefèvre emerged as the spokesman of a new direction that may rightly be identified as one of the earliest manifestations of the Christian humanism that would dominate the intellectual and spiritual life of northern Europe on the eve of the Protestant Reformation.²⁰

²⁰ A brief but helpful survey of the career of Lefèvre is Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, *Lefèvre: Pioneer of Ecclesiastical Renewal in France* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1984), though it places much more emphasis on Lefèvre's role in the origin of the Reformation in France than on his pre-Reformation development. A thoughtful interpretation of his concept of Christian antiquity and the devoted circle of followers that gathered around him in the first and second decades of the sixteenth century is Eugene F. Rice, Jr., "The Humanist Idea of Christian Antiquity: Lefèvre d'Étaples and His Circle," in *French Humanism*, ed. Gundersheimer, pp. 163–80. Rice has also published a number of other articles on Lefèvre and is the editor of a valuable collection of source-material, *The Prefatory Epistles of Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples and Related Texts* (New York, 1972). Discussions of Lefèvre's biblical scholarship include two books by Guy Bedouelle, *Lefèvre d'Étaples et l'intelligence des écritures* (Geneva, 1976) and *Le Quincuplex Psalterium de Lefèvre d'Étaples: Un guide de lecture* (Geneva, 1979). Henry Heller, "The Evangelism of Lefèvre d'Étaples, 1525," *Studies in the Renaissance* 19 (1972), 42–77, discusses Lefèvre's attempt to put his ideas of Christian-humanist reform into practice during the early 1520s in collaboration with his patron Guillaume Briçonnet, bishop of Meaux. A collection of more recent studies is

Famous though Lefèvre was, the devotion he aroused among reform-minded humanists pales in comparison to the influence of his younger contemporary Desiderius Erasmus. Erasmus, however, seems to represent not a gradual evolution from classical interests to Christian humanism but a remarkably rapid change, a sort of conversion that transformed his life forever. At the end of the fifteenth century, he was a young monk, doubtful about his own monastic vocation, disillusioned with his experience as a student of scholastic theology at Paris, and (except for his classical interests) adrift in life. He seemed to be just another of the many poets who clustered in the French capital in hopes of finding a patron and winning literary fame. After an apparently unremarkable trip to England in 1499 as the guest of an aristocratic pupil who introduced him to English intellectuals like John Colet, William Latimer, William Grocyn, and Thomas Linacre, he returned to France and later to the Netherlands, still impoverished and obscure.

Between the trip to England in 1499 and the publication of his *Enchiridion militis Christiani* in 1503, Erasmus entered the path that ultimately made him the greatest intellectual and religious figure of the pre-Reformation period, and a founder of the sort of Christian humanism that inspired nearly all of the young humanists of transalpine Europe in the first four decades of the sixteenth century. Through hard work, he made himself one of his generation's ablest Hellenists, an innovative and talented editor of classical and patristic authors, and an epoch-making biblical scholar, as well as a sharp critic of the contemporary church. The mystery here is the origin of this sudden transformation from rootless Latin poet to northern Europe's most influential scholar and inspirer of religious reform. Claims that meeting John Colet in 1499 was the cause of Erasmus' remarkable conversion overlook the fundamental incompatibility of their views on study of the Bible. He and Colet became good friends, but John Gleason's study of Colet's life and thought proves that from an early date, Erasmus realized not only that their concepts of biblical scholarship were different but also that he was supremely competent and headed along the right track, while Colet was not.²¹

Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples: Actes du Colloque d'Étaples les 7 et 8 novembre 1992 (Paris, 1995). Always helpful and still influential despite its age is Renaudet, *Pré-reforme et humanisme*, where Lefèvre is discussed repeatedly.

²¹ Gleason, *John Colet*, pp. 58–59 on Colet's failure to understand the need for mastery of Greek, and pp. 93–124 on Erasmus' awareness of Colet's intellectual and temperamental limitations and the implausibility of claims made by biographers who have credited Colet with being the source of Erasmus' turning to theology and conceiving his own new approach to theology and the study of the Bible. Gleason also provides helpful discussion of the reasons

Two recent accounts of Erasmus' intellectual development agree with Gleason's assessment of the limitations of Colet but do suggest that Erasmus' acquaintance with Grocyn and Linacre, both of whom he also met in 1499, may have revealed to him "something of the riches that lay open to those who knew Greek." Both books conclude (with appropriate caution about the speculative nature of the claim) that "it seems to have been in England that he acquired the conviction that *vetus theologia* [implying a theology that is not only ancient theology but also true] required a thorough knowledge of Greek."²² What is not merely speculative is that "within a few months of returning to the Continent[,] Greek had become his passion."²³ His determination to master Greek is well documented by his letters from this period. As early as December of 1500, a letter to Jacob Batt, written while Erasmus was staying temporarily at Orléans, states that the principal motive for his intention to return promptly to Paris was his desire to pursue his study of Greek.²⁴ Despite the immense difficulty of learning Greek without a tutor and with only limited access to Greek texts, Erasmus mastered the language. By 1505 at the latest, he was bold enough to translate a difficult text, the *Hecuba* of Euripides, followed the next year by the same author's *Iphigenia in Aulis*. Both works were

why, despite their differences, the two men developed a close and respectful relationship. Gleason's demolition of the older idea that Colet was the formative influence on the intellectual maturation of Erasmus and the development of the Erasmian program of Christian humanism is both important and convincing.

²² James D. Tracy, *Erasmus of the Low Countries* (Berkeley, 1996), pp. 31–32; Cornelis Augustijn, *Erasmus: His Life, Works, and Influence*, trans. J.C. Grayson (Toronto, 1991), pp. 31–33, 37–39. The quoted passages are from Tracy, p. 32. Both authors accept Gleason's conclusion that Colet had no inkling of the crucial role of Greek in the new humanistic study of the Bible and so could not have been the major source of Erasmus' reorientation; and both agree that the influence of Erasmus' other English acquaintances might have led to his sudden decision to devote himself to mastery of the Greek language.

²³ Tracy, *Erasmus of the Low Countries*, p. 32.

²⁴ Erasmus to Batt, Orléans, 11 December 1500, Ep. 138 (CWE 1:294–300; Allen 1:320–24). Even earlier, in March, 1500, in a letter to the same friend, Erasmus revealed both the difficulty of mastering Greek and the way in which his poverty impeded his progress: "My readings in Greek all but crush my spirit; but I have no spare time and no means to purchase books or employ the services of a tutor" (Ep. 123: CWE 1:249–50; Allen 1:285). Yet he struggled on, declaring in his next letter, "I have turned my entire attention to Greek. The first thing I shall do, as soon as the money [anticipated from a patron] arrives, is to buy some Greek authors; after that, I shall buy clothes" (Ep. 124: CWE 1:252; Allen 1:288). The letters of Erasmus are cited here by epistle number (Ep.) and by volume and page both in the current English translation, *The Correspondence of Erasmus*, in *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vols. 1–12 [to date] (Toronto, 1974–), and in the critical edition of the Latin text, *Opus epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami*, eds. P.S. Allen et al., 11 vols. (Oxford, 1906–58).

published together by the Paris printer Josse Bade in September of 1506. Although his dedication to William Warham, archbishop of Canterbury, concerns translation of a secular author, Erasmus declares that the ultimate goal of his work on Greek authors is "to restore or promote . . . the science of theology which had fallen into a most shameful condition through scholastic trifling. . . ."²⁵ More than a year before he dedicated this translation to Archbishop Warham, a letter to John Colet declares that Erasmus had made the study of Scripture his life's work:

Hereafter I intend to address myself to the Scriptures and to spend all the rest of my life upon them. Three years ago, indeed, I ventured to do something on Paul's Epistle to the Romans. . . ; and would have gone on, but for certain distractions of which the most important was that I needed the Greek at every point. Therefore for nearly the past three years I have been wholly absorbed by Greek; and I do not think my efforts have been altogether wasted.²⁶

The first public sign of this new direction came in 1503, when he published his *Enchiridion*. It was the first expression of the new spiritual direction that he called "the philosophy of Christ." The initial publication of the *Enchiridion* as part of a collection of short works did not attract much attention; only after its first publication as a separate work in 1515 did the tract become "immensely popular." Twenty-nine Latin editions were published between 1519 and 1523. It was translated from Latin into French, Dutch, Spanish, German, and English and frequently reprinted.²⁷ It marks Erasmus' emergence as a spiritual writer. The secret of its spectacular popular success was its combination of three elements: emphasis on personal spiritual experience rather than external ceremonies, frank criticism of many clergymen for moral corruption and for their promotion of external observances that enhanced their own prestige and their revenues, and insistence that true religion must be expressed in a morally upright life rather than in punctilious observance of the external trappings of religion.

Although there were elements of this "philosophy of Christ" in the thought of the young Erasmus, a probable source of this spiritual side

²⁵ The dedication of the *Hecuba* to Erasmus' friend and patron Archbishop Warham is Ep. 188, dated at London, 24 January 1506 (CWE 2:107-10; Allen 1:417-20). The letter discusses the difficulties of translating a Greek author into Latin. The passage quoted here is CWE 2:107; Allen 1:418.

²⁶ Erasmus to Colet, [December?] 1504, Ep. 181 (CWE 2:86-87; Allen 1:404-5).

²⁷ Augustijn, *Erasmus*, p. 44.

of Erasmus' intellectual reorientation was his close friendship with Jean Vitrier, warden of the Observant Franciscan friary at St. Omer. Vitrier had gained respect in his own order for his intellectual ability and earnest personal devotion. He had been made warden of the friary at Namur and then at St. Omer. But he was also resented for his aggressive promotion of his own ideals of Christian devotion and his sharp criticism of lax discipline among the clergy and the promotion of superficial religious observances by clergy who profited from the gullibility of simple folk. His fearless criticism of ecclesiastical practices caused him much trouble, even a censure by the Paris theological faculty and formal charges of heresy before the bishop's court. Although he was exonerated, he was eventually removed as warden and relegated to pastoral work in obscure places. Though thwarted in his own efforts to improve the quality of religion, he seems to have had great influence on the emergent spirituality of the mature Erasmus. He encouraged Erasmus' interest in the Epistles of St. Paul. Perhaps even more important, he introduced Erasmus to the thought of the first great patristic theologian, Origen, whose influence did much to shape Erasmus' ideas on religion. Vitrier and Erasmus were in frequent contact while Erasmus was working on the *Enchiridion* in 1501 and 1502, and Vitrier encouraged him to revise and publish it.²⁸ The critical, reformist aspect of Erasmus' "philosophy of Christ" began to influence the public even before the *Enchiridion* itself began to attract attention, largely because of the literary success of his popular satirical works such as *The Praise of Folly* (first edition, 1511), a success that was extended by the popularity of his later series of satirical dialogues, the *Colloquies*.²⁹

²⁸ On Vitrier's influence, see Tracy, *Erasmus of the Low Countries*, pp. 32–33; Augustijn, *Erasmus*, p. 43, with a helpful evaluation of the *Enchiridion* following on pp. 43–55; also the biographical sketch by André Godin in *Contemporaries of Erasmus: A Biographical Register*, 3 vols. (Toronto, 1985–87), 3:408–9, which draws on Godin's earlier publications, *Spiritualité franciscaine en Flandre au XVI^e siècle: L'Homélie de Jean Vitrier* (Geneva, 1971), and *Erasmus lecteur d'Origène* (Geneva, 1982).

²⁹ The 1511 edition of *The Praise of Folly* already contained many sharply critical statements about the defects of contemporary religious practice and about clergy who encouraged and profited from unsound practices, and the eleven later editions (not counting unauthorized reprints) that followed through 1533 added new critical material. The satire also promotes the underlying ideas of sound religion that first found expression in the *Enchiridion* and constituted the essence of his "philosophy of Christ." The *Colloquies*, which began as simple exercises in Latin conversation that the young Erasmus created for the pupils he tutored, was first printed in an unauthorized edition in 1518, still little more than a manual of conversation; but the authorized edition of 1522 transformed the collection of dialogues into a powerful statement of Erasmus' religious ideas and contained

What made Erasmus an especially powerful intellectual figure, however, was that his ideological position, the "philosophy of Christ," was linked to his emergence as a great textual scholar, winning for him a leading role as an interpreter, translator, and editor of classical texts, works of the Church Fathers, and the Bible. In biblical studies, the area in which he had the greatest influence, the crucial first step occurred in 1504–5, with his discovery and publication of the unpublished *Annotations on the New Testament*, in which Lorenzo Valla applied his knowledge of Greek to explain obscure passages in the Latin Bible and to criticize the accuracy of the traditional Vulgate translation. Valla's influence sharpened Erasmus' determination to probe the Greek text of the New Testament and to bring insights from those studies into his program of spiritual renewal. His ambitious program of biblical, patristic, and classical scholarship required more than ten years of hard work, three of them spent in Italy, to reach fulfillment.³⁰

In 1516, the most productive year of his life, Erasmus brought out the first published edition of the Greek New Testament, as well as a four-volume edition of the letters of St. Jerome (the greatest scholar among the Latin Church Fathers) and an edition of the Roman moral philosopher Seneca. Even before 1516, publications on the Church Fathers and on classical language and literature, as well as his satirical *Folly*, had begun to attract attention and admiration from humanists. In 1514, while Erasmus was traveling up the Rhine from the Netherlands to Basel, local groups of German humanists turned out to greet him at dockside in order to celebrate his presence. They hailed him as the greatest German scholar of his generation—a rather remarkable development for a Hollander who was never quite certain whether he was a German at all.³¹ His gift for satire, expressed in books like *The Praise of Folly* and the considerably later *Colloquies*, both stimulated and articulated the unrest of many educated and earnest young humanists. They embraced his denunciation

cutting criticisms of abuses in both the church and secular society. Eleven more editions (not counting unauthorized reprints) appeared down to 1533, each with new material that extended the range of Erasmian criticism.

³⁰ Paul Botley, *Latin Translation in the Renaissance: The Theory and Practice of Leonardo Bruni, Giannozzo Manetti and Desiderius Erasmus* (Cambridge, 2004), focuses much of his discussion of Renaissance translations from Greek to Latin on the biblical scholarship of Valla and Erasmus, and also on Giannozzo Manetti (1396–1459), who produced a complete Latin translation of the New Testament that has never been published. Botley lays special emphasis on the importance of the new Latin translation that Erasmus produced to accompany his edition of the Greek text of the New Testament.

³¹ James D. Tracy, "Erasmus Becomes a German," *Renaissance Quarterly* 21 (1968), 281–88.

and ridicule of corrupt clergymen who exploited simple people by promoting materialistic observances that did little for the soul but much to enhance the wealth and power of the clergy. Erasmus also was a critic of social injustice and an outspoken pacifist in an age of frequent wars. He had developed an explicitly Christian type of humanistic scholarship and a characteristically "Erasmian" vision of religious experience and religious renewal. He had become the principal figure of the movement of Christian humanism, hailed by humanists throughout northern Europe (and for two decades, also in Spain) as a source of inspiration. He had become the most famous scholar in Europe. Together with his French counterpart Lefèvre d'Étaples, he was both the creator and the embodiment of Christian humanism, a movement that on the brink of the Reformation had become the most dynamic force in the spiritual and intellectual life of transalpine Europe.

RENAISSANCE HUMANISM: THE RHETORICAL TURN

Eckhard Keßler

A concept in change

Concepts, such as “Idealism,” “Platonism,” “Realism,” and, in the case of this paper, “Humanism,” do not signify well-defined entities but refer to a certain cluster of phenomena, trying to provide some kind of unity and common meaning. They serve as instruments to create order and structure among the multitudes of varying attitudes and beliefs, actions, and events. They are indispensable when we try to understand the world of history, but at the same time they tend to be extremely unreliable and weak. The more phenomena they can claim to encompass, the less certain and exact is their meaning; the more distinctly and clearly their meaning is defined, the less numerous are the items encompassed, and less effective the structures designed.

Humanism is an invention of the nineteenth century. It was first imposed to signify a certain concept of general education through the classics¹ and was later adapted to denote the Renaissance as the age devoted to the revival of classical antiquity,² providing the means for a new and anti-Scholastic type of learning. In this broadest sense, however, humanism seemed to lose much of its significance, since it could successfully be applied to a growing number of similar educational movements from the time of Cicero through several periods of the Middle Ages to the neo-humanism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.³ To regain a more concise and exact meaning, Renaissance humanism had to be more narrowly specified. It was deprived of the philosophical and scientific elements inherent in its medieval versions⁴ and reduced to a mere rhetorical, philological, and

¹ See Friedrich Immanuel Niethammer, “Der Streit des Philanthropinismus und des Humanismus,” in his *Die Theorie des Erziehungsunterrichtes unserer Zeit* (1908, repr. Weinheim, 1968).

² See Georg Voigt, *Die Wiederbelebung des classischen Alterthums oder das erste Jahrhundert des Humanismus*, 2 vols. (1859, 4th ed. Berlin 1960).

³ See Wallace K. Ferguson, *The Renaissance in Historical Thought. Five Centuries of Interpretation* (Cambridge, MA, 1948); August Buck, *Humanismus. Seine europäische Entwicklung in Dokumenten und Darstellungen* (Freiburg, 1987).

⁴ See Pierre Duhem, *Études sur Léonard de Vinci*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1906–13), 3:v; Ernst

literary enterprise. The humanist was confined to the disciplines of the *studia humanitatis*, which, as an instructor, he was bound to teach,⁵ and he was defined as *orator*, dedicated to the pursuit of eloquence and to the political, social, and moral bearings that were expected to result from its proper use.⁶ In this guise the humanist has been the subject of research since the Second World War until, in the last two decades, the concept of Renaissance humanism experienced a further reduction.

In 1986 Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine deprived the comprehensive definition of humanism of the objectives that were to be achieved through humanistic education,⁷ and most recently Ronald Witt has defined the very nature of Renaissance humanism as being the “intention to imitate ancient Latin style”⁸ for its own sake. Now after two centuries of reduction, the concept of Renaissance humanism has reached a point, it seems, where, in an attempt to formulate a precise definition, it ends up as a minor concept within the singular discipline of literary history while various other phenomena, in former times regarded as being essential parts of Renaissance humanism, have to be provided for by a totally new conceptualization. Yet, this does not have to be the case, for unless I am totally wrong, according to Ronald Witt, the “intention to imitate ancient Latin style” is not meant to denote the very *essence* of Renaissance humanism but rather its *origin*, so that every phenomenon that emerges from this origin or that can be derived from it would have a claim to this concept, and the criterion regarding the imitation of “ancient Latin style” would not limit the concept,

Cassirer, *Individuum und Kosmos in der Philosophie der Renaissance* (Leipzig, 1928), pp. 1–3; idem, *The Individual and the Cosmos in Renaissance Philosophy*, trans. M. Domandi (Philadelphia, 1972).

⁵ Paul Oskar Kristeller, “The Humanist Movement,” in his *Renaissance Thought: The Classic, Scholastic and Humanist Strains* (New York, 1961), pp. 3–23.

⁶ Hanna Holborn Gray, “Renaissance Humanism: The Pursuit of Eloquence,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 24 (1963), 497–514; Eugenio Garin, *Der italienische Humanismus. Philosophie und bürgerliches Leben* (Bern, 1947); idem, *Italian Humanism. Philosophy and Civic Life in the Renaissance*, trans. P. Munz, (Oxford, 1965); Hans Baron, *In Search of Florentine Civic Humanism: Essays on the Transition from Medieval to Modern Thought*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1988).

⁷ Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities. Education and the Liberal Arts in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA, 1986); James Hankins, “The ‘Baron Thesis’ after Forty Years and Some Recent Studies of Leonardo Bruni,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 56 (1995), 309–38; James Hankins, ed., *Renaissance Civic Humanism: Reappraisals and Reflections* (Cambridge, 2003).

⁸ Ronald G. Witt, “In the Footsteps of the Ancients’: *The Origins of Humanism from Lovato to Bruni* (Leiden, 2000), p. 22; see also the review by Robert Black, *Vivarium* 40 (2002), 272–97.

but would widen the perspectives for new approaches to and new questions in the research of Renaissance humanism. It is my intention in this paper to analyze the consequences or by-products that spring from the process of attempting “to imitate ancient Latin style” and that, therefore, may also fall into the category of Renaissance humanism.

The grammatical origins of humanist rhetoric

Taking for granted that at the beginning of the humanist movement there existed in those men, whom we may call the first humanists, the intention to write Latin poetry and prose texts in a style similar to that of ancient classical authors, it must have been their primary concern to get acquainted as intimately as possible with the models suitable for imitation and to get to know as thoroughly as possible how to make use of them. Therefore, as Robert Black has recently proved,⁹ the fact that the secondary grammar curriculum differed significantly between northern Europe and Italy may have provided a favorable circumstance or even a necessary condition for the emergence of Renaissance humanism in Italy. While outside of Italy, secondary grammar had abandoned the literary tradition, and having submitted to logical and metaphysical premises, had paved the way for scholastic philosophy and science, in Trecento Italy secondary grammar continued to teach the classical authors. Rooted in the grammatical tradition of Quintilian and Isidor of Sevilla, secondary grammar met the needs of rhetoric as taught in the guise of *ars dictaminis* according to the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and Cicero’s *De inventione*.¹⁰ Furthermore, in the course of the Trecento and the Quattrocento, the teaching of grammar¹¹ intensified and was accompanied by the rediscovery of classical texts and rhetorical treatises.¹² While for instance Petrarch knew Cicero’s *De oratore* and Quintilian’s *Institutio* only in incomplete forms, the next century had access not only to the complete books of both but also to Cicero’s *Orator*, *Brutus* and all of his orations and letters.¹³ These new texts and handbooks

⁹ Robert Black, *Humanism and Education in Medieval and Renaissance Italy. Tradition and Innovation in Latin Schools from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 29–30 and 72–74.

¹⁰ Witt, ‘*In the Footsteps of the Ancients*’, pp. 89–95 and 351–53.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 93 n. 34.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 338–51.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 351.

were integrated into the teaching of secondary grammar, which, following Quintilian, was called historical grammar,¹⁴ and whose instructor, following Suetonius, was called the *grammaticus* or *auctorista* as opposed to the *grammatista*, the teacher of elementary grammar curriculum.¹⁵ Thus, the result was a type of rhetorical education that allowed for perfect Ciceronian style and truly humanistic writings.¹⁶

We get an idea of what the grammar curriculum of the future humanist looked like in Baptista Guarino's *De modo et ordine docendi et discendi* in which the son of the great humanist teacher, Guarino da Verona, describes the pedagogical practice of his father and reports on its contents, methods, and scope. Written at Ferrara in 1459, printed there twice in 1474, and reprinted several times north of the Alps at the turn of the century,¹⁷ this small book seems to have served as the mediator of humanist teaching to the Erasmus circle¹⁸ and, probably, also to the Lefèvre group in Paris.¹⁹ It was used extensively by Remigio Sabbadini in his *Il metodo degli uma-*

¹⁴ Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* 1. 9. 1.

¹⁵ Suetonius, *De grammaticis* 4.24; Giuseppe Billanovich, "Auctorista—humanista—orator," *Rivista di cultura classica e medioevale* 7 (1965), 143–63; Black, *Humanism and Education*, pp. 30–33 and 364–65.

¹⁶ Witt, 'In the Footsteps of the Ancients,' p. 340; for the gradual recovery of classical Latin style, see also H. Weisinger, "Who Began the Revival of Learning? The Renaissance Point of View," *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts and Letters* 30 (1944), 625–38.

¹⁷ The titles differ in the various editions. The two Ferrara editions of 1474 are entitled *De ordine docendi ac studendi*. The most diffused edition, Heidelberg, 1489, obviously inspired by Rudolph Agricola, is entitled *De modo et ordine docendi ac discendi*; the Straßburg edition of 1514 edited by Beatus Rhenanus has the same title, while the title of the Vienna 1515 edition seems to have deleted *discendi*. There is a more recent edition, Jena, 1704, edited by the historian of philosophy, B.G. Struvius (For Struvius see Jakob Brucker, *Historiae Criticae Philosophiae* 6 [Leipzig 1768] 6:16–17; Giovanni Santinello, ed., *Models of the History of Philosophy*, trans. C.W.T. Blackwell [Dordrecht, 1993], passim). There are two modern editions: one with an Italian translation by Eugenio Garin in his *Il pensiero pedagogico dell'Umanesimo* (Florence, 1958), pp. 434–71, and another with an English translation by Craig W. Kallendorf in his *Humanist Educational Treatises* (Cambridge, MA, 2002), pp. 260–309. Garin (p. 434) refers to two Ferrara editions published in 1472 and 1485 instead of the two Ferrara editions of 1474. In the commentary to Rhenanus' dedicatory letter, the editors of the *Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus* (eds. A. Horawitz and K. Hartfelder, repr. Nieuwkoop, 1966, p. 63 n. 2) mention two more Italian editions, Verona, 1489 and Mutinae, 1496. I am quoting Kallendorf's edition and translation.

¹⁸ Lisa Jardine, "Inventing Rudolph Agricola: Cultural Transmission, Renaissance Dialectic, and the Emerging Humanities," in *The Transmission of Culture in Early Modern Europe*, eds. A. Grafton and A. Blair (Philadelphia, 1990), pp. 39–86, esp. 56–60.

¹⁹ Beatus Rhenanus, the editor of the 1514 Straßburg edition, had worked before with Lefèvre at Paris and is said to have inherited much of his interest in Italian Humanism there. See John F. D'Amico, "Beatus Rhenanus and Italian Humanism," in *Roman and*

nisti in 1926²⁰ and is now included in Kallendorf's *Humanist Educational Treatises* (2002).

Guarino's treatise on teaching grammar

After some general introductory remarks,²¹ Guarino divides his treatise, following Quintilian,²² into the elementary *grammatica methodice*²³ and the secondary *grammatica hystorice*,²⁴ which again has two parts, the first one devoted to the *modus docendi*, the way of instruction by the teacher²⁵ and the second to the *modus discendi*, the way of studying by the student himself.²⁶ The transition from elementary to secondary grammar is predicated on the fact that perfect Ciceronian style depends on reading many, varied works (*multarum et variarum rerum lectio*), or, as it were, on knowledge of many subjects, which is the topic of the following paragraphs in Guarino's treatise.²⁷

The 'wide reading,' *multarum rerum lectio*, included many recommended authors: historians, beginning with Valerius Maximus and the like;²⁸ poets of all kinds;²⁹ all sorts of natural historians;³⁰ the rhetorical works of Cicero and Quintilian,³¹ the *Dialectics* and *Ethics* of Aristotle, Plato's dialogues,

German Humanism, 1450–1550, ed. P.F. Grendler (Aldershot, 1993), study 10, esp. pp. 242–43. The fact, however, that in his dedication to Lukas Palinuros, Beatus Rhenanus compares Guarino's treatise to analogous works by Erasmus (*De ordine studii*) and Agricola (*De formando studio ad Barbirianum*) could mean that at that time the Guarinian method had already been adopted in northern Europe and Rhenanus' edition was not so much an innovation but a confirmation. See *Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus* (see above, n. 17) p. 63: "Scribit de praeceptoris officio et discendi ratione, quam rem ad Guil. Thaleium Erasmus, Rodolphus ad Barbirianum uterque doctissime explicarunt."

²⁰ Remigio Sabbadini, *Il metodo degli umanisti* (Florence, 1926).

²¹ Guarino, *De modo et ordine docendi ac discendi*, §§ 1–7, ed. and trans. Kallendorf, *Humanist Educational Treatises*, pp. 259–69.

²² See above, n. 14.

²³ Guarino, *De modo et ordine*, §§ 8–21, pp. 268–85.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, §§ 22–38, pp. 284–309.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, §§ 22–28, pp. 284–93.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, §§ 29–38, pp. 293–309.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, §§ 21–22, p. 284: "Nemo tamen existimet in sola illa epistularum declamatione pinguem, et quam Cicero 'adipatam' vocat orationem consistere; eam namque multarum et variarum rerum lectio pariet, Flacco teste, 'scribendi recte sapere est et principium et fons.' (22) Quare ut ad alteram grammaticae partem, quam historichen diximus nominari, traducantur iam tempus erit."

²⁸ *Ibid.*, § 22, pp. 284–87.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, §§ 23–25, pp. 286–91.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, § 26, pp. 290–91.

³¹ *Ibid.*, § 27, pp. 292–95.

and Cicero's moral philosophy.³² These authors were to be taught by the instructor, but, in addition there were an undetermined number of further authors to be read and studied by the student on his own, beginning with "miscellaneous works" such as Gellius, Macrobius and Pliny and also St. Augustine's *City of God*.³³

The term 'various reading,' *variarum rerum lectio*, however, does not just mean that the works studied should be by various authors and on various subjects. The concept of "various reading" seems to apply to the nature of the individual writings themselves, which do not offer a systematic body of knowledge. They consist, instead, of a variety of disparate information, as is the case with Valerius Maximus, Gellius, Macrobius, and Pliny,³⁴ or of an accumulation of curious or memorable facts, as is the case with the Augustinian *City of God*, which Guarino describes as "a work filled with historical information as well as material on the rites and religion of the ancients."³⁵

Guarino's grammatical method of reading

At first glance, the fact that both parts of the secondary grammar start with unsystematic, miscellaneous writings such as Valerius Maximus and Aulus Gellius may make us suppose that they were considered less difficult to understand than the more sophisticated, systematic treatises that were to be studied later. However, the treatment to which the *City of God* is subjected in Guarino's description seems to indicate that the reason for this arrangement is a strategic rather than a pedagogical one. In other words, the miscellaneous writings are put at the beginning to serve as an introduction to the general method of reading that had to be applied to all texts and writings, regardless of whether they consisted of mere collections of more or less unrelated bits of information, displayed a consistent narrative order, or showed a systematic, thematic structure.

³² Ibid., § 28, pp. 294–95.

³³ Ibid., § 31, pp. 294–97.

³⁴ See *ibid.*, § 22, pp. 284–85 for the characterization of Valerius Maximus ("qui res gestas carptim collegerunt"); and *ibid.*, § 31, pp. 294–95, for the characterizations of Gellius and Macrobius ("qui variis ex rebus compositi sunt") and of Pliny's *Natural History* ("quae non minus varia est quam ipsa natura").

³⁵ Ibid., § 31, pp. 294–95: "his addimus Augustinus *De civitate Dei*, qui liber historiis et tam ritu veterum quam religione refertus est."

Indeed, after having recommended Valerius Maximus for beginners of secondary grammar, Guarino admonishes the teacher to have his students apply sequentially the same method of reading to other historians: "Then they should read the remaining historians in order, from whom they will excerpt the customs, manners, and laws of various peoples, the various fortunes that befell individuals of genius and their vices and virtues."³⁶ For the rest of the authors, Guarino gives only a frame of reference according to which they should become subject to the same procedure. And later, after having described St. Augustine's *City of God* as if it were a miscellaneous writing, Guarino gives a short general outline of his method for "various reading":

1. He establishes, as the general principle of his method, that reading means primarily excerpting: ". . . they should hold fast to the practice of always making excerpts of what they read."³⁷ To confirm this principle, he maintains that this method has the advantage of letting the reader profit from all kinds of writings, regardless of their quality: "They should convince themselves of the truth of Pliny's dictum, that 'there is no book so bad that it is totally useless.'³⁸ Furthermore, he claims, referring again to Pliny, that this method of study, this *studendi ratio*, had been highly esteemed in antiquity.³⁹
2. He defines the general character of what should be excerpted as being either *memoratu digna*, 'worth remembering,' or *paucis in locis inveniri*, 'rarely found': "Let them excerpt those things in particular, which seem worth remembering and are rarely found."⁴⁰
3. He explains what the students should do with the excerpts resulting from their reading. They should first note them down and arrange them in a way in which those that pertain to the same matter are put under the same heading: "In the course of their miscellaneous

³⁶ Ibid., § 22, pp. 286–87: "Reliquos deinde historiographos ordine perlegent, hinc variarum gentium mores, instituta leges, hinc varias hominum fortunas ingeniorum et vitia et virtutes excerptent."

³⁷ Ibid., § 31, pp. 294–95: "Sed omnino illud teneant, ut semper ex iis quae legunt conentur excerptere."

³⁸ Ibid.: "sibique persuadeant, quod Plinius dictitare solebat, 'nullum esse librum tam malum ut non in aliqua parte prosit.'"

³⁹ Ibid.: "Haec studendi ratio apud veteres observata fuit adeo, ut Plinius maior electorum commentarios centum et sexaginta epistolographos sororis filio reliquerit, quos aliquando quaddingentis millibus nummum Larcio Licinio in Hispania vendere potuit."

⁴⁰ Ibid.: "Ea vero potissimum excerptent, quae et memoratu digna et paucis in locis inveniri videbuntur."

reading, *inter legendum ex variis libris*, (the students) will note down maxims, *adnotabunt sententias*, pertinent to the same matter, *quae ad eandem materiam pertinent*, and collect them in one and the same place, *et in unum quendam locum colligent*.⁴¹ They should then make sure to memorize anything excellent they may have heard or read.⁴²

When the student finally completed this curriculum of humanist grammar, he possessed, as Guarino boasts at the end of his treatise, the most varied knowledge, *scientia varia*, possible, which equals what the Greeks meant by *paideia*, the Romans by *humanitas*, and what in Guarino's time was called 'education and instruction in the good arts,' *eruditio et institutio in bonas artes*.⁴³

The consequence: a rhetoric-based humanistic culture

Although Guarino claims that his *scientia varia* is based on the same "natural desire to know" that in the opening of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* serves as legitimization of speculative science,⁴⁴ there is no doubt that his science is not, like the Aristotelian one, an end in itself, but as in Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, it is subject to the needs of oratory and the idea of perfect Ciceronian style.⁴⁵ This is demonstrated by the

⁴¹ Ibid., § 31, pp. 296–97: "Inter legendum ex variis libris sententias quae ad eandem materiam pertinent adnotabunt, et in unum quendam locum colligent."

⁴² Ibid.: "Pythagoreorumque more quicquid excellens interdum legerint vel audierint vesperi commemorabunt."

⁴³ Ibid., § 38, pp. 306–07: "quam enim Graeci 'paideian' vocant nos 'eruditionem institutionemque in bonas artes' dicimus; eam 'humanitatem' quoque veteres nominarunt, quia scientiae cura ex universis animantibus uni homini data sit. Hoc autem studiorum genus variam magis quam reliqua scientiam complectitur." In this context the term *paideia* is somewhat unusual. It may be that Guarino is referring to Aristotle's treatise *De partibus animalium* I,1; 639 a 1–12, which had been translated before 1458 by Theodore Gaza, who had been professor of Greek at Ferrara (See Stefano Perfetti, *Aristotle's Zoology and Its Renaissance Commentators [1521–1601]*, pp. 13–28). Aristotle is distinguishing *epistème* (real science) from *paideia*, which Gaza translates as *peritia*, and which signifies a certain type of knowledge, which is not yet science but an *eruditio* necessary for those who want to acquire science. If this is the case, Guarino was the first to begin the discussion of this concept in the sixteenth century. See Eckhard Kessler, "Method in the Aristotelian Tradition: Taking a Second Look," in *Method and Order in Renaissance Philosophy of Nature. The Aristotle Commentary Tradition*, eds. Daniel. A. Di Liscia, Eckhard Kessler, and Charlotte Methuen (Aldershot, 1997), pp. 113–42.

⁴⁴ Ibid.: "Habent ceteri animantes insitum aliquid natura, ut equi currere, aves volare; hominibus vero sciendi cupiditas tradita est, unde et humanitatis studia sunt nuncupata"; cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* I,1; 981a1.

⁴⁵ See above, n. 28.

numerous remarks throughout the treatise that relate the various acts of reading and excerpting to the various rhetorical qualities that they are meant to generate:

1. There is, first of all, perfect mastery of the Latin language, based on an understanding and memorization of individual words, *vis vocabulorum*, and of complex expressions, *sententiae*,⁴⁶ which imbue everyday speech⁴⁷ as well as artistic writing⁴⁸ with effortless⁴⁹ purity and propriety, refinement and elegance⁵⁰ and which result in that copious and ornate style⁵¹ sought by the early humanists.
2. Yet, even though the primary objective of Guarino's secondary grammar is classical Latin style in speaking and writing, oratorical instruction does not confine itself to the teaching of mere words and verbal expressions. Since knowledge of the words always implies knowledge of the meaning of the words, of the *res*, which are represented by the words,⁵² teaching of the words cannot occur without simultaneously teaching the things and facts they represent. Thus it is not at all surprising that, to the extent that the orator should be able to speak in

⁴⁶ Ibid., § 30, pp. 294–95: “. . . radicitus, ut aiunt, sententias et vocabulorum vim annotent. . . Hoc exercitationis genus . . . studiosis quasi quandam expositionum cellam promptuariam et memoriae subsidium praestat.” I differ from Kallendorf's rendering of *vis vocabulorum* as “meaning of singular words.” I believe that *sententia* has the more comprehensive meaning of “complex expression” that it has in Quintilian 8, 5, 1–2: “Sententiam veteres, quod animo sensissent, vocaverunt. Id cum est apud oratores frequentissimum, tum etiam in usu cotidiano quasdam reliquias habet. . . non raro tamen et sic locuti sunt, ut sensa sua dicerent. Nam sensus corporis videbantur, sed consuetudo iam tenuit, ut mente concepta ‘sensus’ vocaremus, lumina autem praecipueque in clausulis posita ‘sententias.’”

⁴⁷ Ibid., § 22, pp. 286–87: “. . . in quotidiano sermone facundiam . . . creabit”; § 25, pp. 288–89: “sententias. . . sermoni quotidiano commodissimas”; “confidat is omnia, quae in quotidiano sermone contigerint, non modo ornate proloqui posse, verum etiam ad omnem materiam sententiam aliquam se habiturum.”

⁴⁸ Ibid., § 27, pp. 290–91: “iam ex superiorum rerum varietate et copiosam et ornatam cum arte coniunctam habebit eloquentiam”; § 34, pp. 298–99: “in verborum compositione pure et eleganter scripta.”

⁴⁹ Ibid.: “scribendi promptitudinem gignit”; § 31, pp. 294–97: “Erit hoc etiam ad orationis copiam tum promptitudinem valde idoneum.”

⁵⁰ Ibid., § 25, pp. 288–89: “Ad sermonis tum puritatem et elegantiam, tum proprietatem”; “sermonis proprietatem mea sententia suppeditabit”; § 30, pp. 294–95: “linguam expolit”; § 34, pp. 298–99: “in verborum compositione pure et eleganter scripta.”

⁵¹ Ibid.: “iam ex superiorum rerum varietate et copiosam et ornatam cum arte coniunctam habebit eloquentiam.”

⁵² The literature on the concept of *res et verba* in the Renaissance is vast and controversial. I refer only to a recently published book where various aspects and positions are discussed by a variety of authors: *Res et verba in der Renaissance*, eds. E. Kessler and I. Maclean (Wiesbaden, 2002).

an adequate manner about all matters,⁵³ he should also possess an adequate knowledge of all these matters.⁵⁴ Therefore, it is inevitable that at the same time the student is taught to be eloquent he is also taught to be knowledgeable of life.⁵⁵ *Copia verborum*, ‘richness of words,’ is accompanied by *copia rerum*, ‘richness of matters’ and vice versa, though, according to Erasmus in his *De ratione studii*, knowledge of words comes earlier but that of matters is more important, *cognitio verborum prior, rerum potior*.⁵⁶

3. Consequently, given that rhetorical instruction is meant to teach not only how to produce literature but also how to write and speak adequately in everyday life, as Guarino states,⁵⁷ the student will inevitably learn also what life is all about, how to organize his life,⁵⁸ and how to behave in the various situations of life,⁵⁹ that is, how to live as a virtuous man, a *vir bonus*. Rudolph Agricola, who had studied with Guarino at Ferrara and who together with Erasmus was to be regarded by Beatus Rhenanus

⁵³ *Ibid.*, § 25, pp. 288–89: “confidat . . . ad omnem materiam sententiam aliquam se habiturum.”

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, § 28, pp. 292–93: “. . . Tusculanae vero (sc. principatum obtinent) propter variam multiplicemque rerum cognitionem, praeter praecepta quae ad omnem ferme scribendi materiam largam nobis copiam exhibent.”

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, § 30, pp. 294–95: “Hoc exercitationis genus mirifice acuit ingenium, *linguam expolit, scribendi promptitudinem gignit, perfectam rerum noticiam inducit*, memoriam confirmat, postremo studiosis quasi quandam expositionum cellam promptuarium et memoriae subsidium praestat.”

⁵⁶ Erasmus, *De ratione studii* in *Opera omnia*, ed. J.C. Margolin, vol. 1, pt. 5 (Amsterdam, 1971), p. 113: “Principio duplex omnino videtur cognitio rerum ac verborum. Verborum prior, rerum potior . . . Etenim cum res non nisi per vocum notas cognoscantur, qui sermonis vim non calleat, is passim in rerum quoque iudicio caecutiatur, hallucinetur, deliret necesse est. Postremo videas nullos omnium magis ubique de vocabulis cavillari, quam eos qui iactitant sese verba negligere, rem ipsam spectare.” This distinction between *cognitio prior* and *cognitio potior* may be inspired by the Aristotelian distinction of “prior known to us” and “prior known per se” or “by nature” (*Posterior Analytics* I, 2; 71 b 33–72 a 5). See also Erasmus, *De copia verborum ac rerum* I, 7 (*Duplicem esse copiam*), in *Opera omnia*, ed. B.I. Knott, vol. 1, pt. 6 (Amsterdam, 1988), pp. 32–33 and the related commentary there for the tradition of this topos.

⁵⁷ See above, n. 49.

⁵⁸ Guarino, *De modo et ordine*, § 23, pp. 286–87: “ad quotidiane vitae institutionem”; § 25, pp. 288–89: “sententias et vitae et sermoni quotidiano commodissimas”, “sales . . . quae vitae sunt ornamento”; § 28, pp. 292–93: “propter praecepta ad omnem vitae partem idonea.”

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, § 22, pp. 284–87: “ad omnes virtutum partes . . . exempla”; “in variis rebus prudentiae opinio”; § 34, pp. 298–99: “studiosus vero eorum sibi exempla proponat, quae omnibus his vescuuntur . . . in sententiis quid fortiter, quid prudenter, quid iuste, quid modeste annotet” (these are the four Ciceronian cardinal virtues); § 35, pp. 300–301: “Quae vero in scriptoribus vitae accommodata et ad virtutis rationem pertinentia reperiuntur, ea memoriae commendanda sunt.”

as the northern heir to Guarino,⁶⁰ makes the same argument (in a Ciceronian manner) that the master should teach simultaneously how to speak and how to act, *dicere et facere*.⁶¹ In the context of this larger concept of rhetorical instruction, the humanist pretext to a thorough moral formation through the studies of classical literature, so dear to the ideal of nineteenth century humanism⁶² and so strongly challenged some twenty years ago as mere propaganda,⁶³ might regain its justification on a less emphatic level.

4. Yet, it seems that we may go one step further. This sort of education was not limited to teaching about the active life and to inculcate moral precepts. In fact, Guarino's former student Rudolph Agricola, who during his stay at Ferrara had become acquainted with the method of reading classical texts by way of excerpting, not only transferred this method from grammar to dialectics or, as it were, from rhetorical to dialectical invention,⁶⁴ but also extended the scope of this method

⁶⁰ Beatus Rhenanus, Dedication letter in his edition of Baptista Guarino's treatise, Straßburg 1514, in *Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus*, eds. A. Horawitz and K. Hartfelder (Leipzig, 1886; repr. Nieuwkoop, 1966), p. 63: "putavi me tibi rem non ingrattam facere, si Guarini libellum de modo et ordine docendi et discendi... imprimendum darem... Scribit de praeceptoris officio et discendi ratione, quam rem ad Guil. Thaleium Erasmus, Rodolphus ad Barbirianum uterque doctissime explicarunt." See Erasmus, *De ratione studii*, (above, n. 56); Agricola, "De formando studio ad Jac. Barbirianum," in Rodolphi Agricola... *Lucubrationes aliquot... caeteraque... opuscula*, per Alardum Aemstelredamum emendata et additis scholiis illustrata (Coloniae, 1539; repr. Nieuwkoop, 1967), pp. 193–294.

⁶¹ Agricola, "Letter to Jacobo Barbiriano, Coloniae, Kal. Nov. 1482," in *Lucubrationes*, p. 210: "Quaerant ergo ubicunque possunt aliquem, qui... docere possit dicere et facere eumque si inveniant, omni sibi parent mercede. Nec enim consilium est eis de re vili atque contempta, sed de filiis suis, quorum utilitati futuraeque vitae omnis illorum labor invigilat." Alardus (see below, n. 64), in his commentary (p. 212) refers to Cicero, *De oratore* 3. 57: "Nam vetus quidem illa doctrina eadem videtur et recte faciendi et bene dicendi magistra; neque disiuncti doctores, sed eidem erant vivendi praeceptores atque dicendi," and to Quintilian *Institutio* 2. 18 and 11. 1. 14: "ceterum idem fere, ut dixi, in omni genere causarum proderit et decebit: est autem quod omnis et semper et ubique deceat, facere ac dicere honeste, contraque neminem unquam ullo in loco turpiter."

⁶² See, for example, August Buck, *Humanismus*, (see above, n. 3).

⁶³ Grafton and Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities* (see above, n. 7), pp. 1–28.

⁶⁴ Agricola, *De inventione dialectica libri* 1.2, per Alardum Amstelredamum accuratius emendati et additis annotationibus illustrati (Coloniae 1539; repr. Frankfurt 1967), p. 9: "Ingeniosissimi itaque virorum, ex effusa illa rerum varietate communia ista capita: velut substantiam, causam, eventum, quaeque reliqua mox dicemus, excerptere. velut cum ad considerandam rem quampiam animum advertissemus, sequentes ista: statim per omnem rei naturam et partes perque omnia consentanea et dissidentia iremus, et duceremus inde argumentum propositis rebus accommodatum." See Eckhard Kessler, "La lecture comme acte d'innovation. Le cas de la grammaire humaniste," in *Penser entre les lignes. Philologie et philosophie au Quattrocento*, ed. Fosca Mariani Zini (Villeneuve d'Ascq, 2001), pp. 19–51.

beyond the art of copious speaking and writing and the skills of prudent counseling and acting in the practice of every day life⁶⁵ to the requirements of the theoretical disciplines and the realm of scientific research.⁶⁶

5. Thus with Agricola, the humanistic paradigm of rhetorical reading reached its broadest scope being used not only in the rational and oratorical disciplines of the *trivium* but also in the theoretical and practical disciplines of philosophy and the *artes*, since all of them deal with matters that may become the subject of speaking and arguing. In this, Agricola follows Cicero, who claims that the perfect orator would be able to speak about everything in a copious and varied way⁶⁷ and that there is only one kind of eloquence, which is applied in all areas of disputation.⁶⁸ Agricola himself is followed by Erasmus, who argues that, even though the average student may be taught only the best, *optima*,

⁶⁵ Agricola, *De inventione dialectica* 1.1; pp. 5–6: “Nec instruere solum os facultas ista, et tantum dicendi copiam subministrare: sed providentiam animi, et recte consulendi quoque aperire viam videtur, quando non alia re prudentiam constare apparet, quam perspicere, quid in quaque re sit positum, et consentanea repugnantiaque, et quo quicque ducat, quidve evenire possit, colligere. . . Nanque dicere prudenter, nisi qui prudenter cogitarit, non potest. Fit enim, ut, quod providerit quis, non faciat: dicit certe, quod non providerit, nemo.”

⁶⁶ Before explaining at length the usefulness of the inventive method in those fields, which are not treated by arts or sciences—as for example the political, economic or legal fields—Agricola mentions all kinds of theoretical knowledge, which, though taught by arts or sciences, are for the most part—or even generally—uncertain, and unsteady and, therefore, they too are subjected to the *ratio locorum*, the rhetorical method of excerpting and collecting; see *ibid.*: “Utilem autem esse hanc locorum rationem apparet, cum magnae parti humanorum studiorum (quandoquidem pleraque in ambiguo haerent et dissentientium certaminibus sunt exposita. Exigua enim portio eorum, quae discimus, certa et immota est, adeoque, si Academiae credimus, hoc solum scimus, quod nihil scimus. Certe pleraque pro cuiusque ingenio, ut accommodatissime ad probandum quisque excogitare potuerit, alio atque alio trahuntur.” See also Quintilian, *Institutio* 2.18, who claims that though rhetoric is basically an active discipline (§ 2.18,2: *in actu consistere*), it is quite possible that at times it can also be a contemplative discipline (§ 2.18,3: *et potest aliquando ipsa rei per se inspectione esse contenta*) or that, in some cases, it may function as an effective discipline (§ 2.18,5: *sed effectivae quoque aliquid simile scriptis orationibus vel historiis, quod ipsum opus in parte oratoria meritum ponimus, consequetur*).

⁶⁷ Cicero, *De oratore* 1.59: “oratorem plenum atque perfectum esse eum, qui de omnibus rebus possit copiose varieque dicere.”

⁶⁸ Cicero, *De oratore* 3.22: “Una est enim. . . eloquentia, quascumque in oras disputationis regionesve delata est; nam sive de caeli natura loquitur sive de terrae, sive de divina vi sive de humana, sive ex inferiore loco sive ex aequo sive ex superiore, sive ut impellat homines sive ut doceat sive ut deterreat sive ut concitet sive ut reflectat sive ut incendat sive ut leniat, sive ad paucos sive ad multos sive inter alienos sive cum suis sive secum, rivis est diducta oratio, non fontibus, et, quocumque ingreditur, eodem est instructu ornataque comitata.”

the teacher should know everything, *omnia*, and if he is not capable of knowing everything, he should at least know the most important concepts, *praecipua*, of every discipline.⁶⁹

So we might be able to argue that, in the first half of the sixteenth century, humanism, which had started with the “intention to imitate ancient Latin style,” had become, on the whole, a paradigm of a rhetoric-based culture.

The consequence: transforming “elocutio” into “literary rhetoric”

Yet, at the same time that the humanists’ rhetorical approach to language, as well as to reality, is generalized to encompass all disciplines, it becomes itself subject to a new process of differentiation. Already in his *Oration in Praise of Philosophy and the Other Arts*, delivered in 1476 at Ferrara, Agricola defined the rational part of philosophy, which the Greeks called *logice*, as the discipline that deals with expressing what we are thinking⁷⁰ and went on to divide this discipline into the three parts of the *trivium*: grammar, dialectics, rhetoric.⁷¹ When Agricola summarizes this division stating that these three disciplines together constitute the body of eloquence—*perficiunt absolvuntque eloquentiae corpus*⁷²—one might say that,

⁶⁹ Erasmus, *De ratione studii* (see above, n. 56) p. 119, 17: “Ergo qui volet instituere quempiam, dabit operam ut statim optima tradat (see Quintilian, *Institutio* 1.1,11), verum qui rectissime tradat optima is omnia sciat necesse est aut si id hominis ingenio negatum est, certe uniuscuiusque disciplinae praecipua... Erit igitur huic per omne scriptorum genus vagandum, ut optimum quemque primum legat, sed ita ut neminem relinquat ingustatum, etiam si parum bonus sit auctor. Atque id quo cumulatiore fructu faciat, ante locos et ordines quosdam ac formulas in hoc paratas habeat, ut quicquid usquam inciderit annotandum, id suo ascribat ordini. Sed hoc qua ratione fieri oporteat, in secundo *De copia* commentario demonstravimus.” The second part of this quotation shows how close Erasmus’ books on the *copia* are to Guarino’s method of reading by excerpting.

⁷⁰ Rudolf Agricola, “In laudem philosophiae et reliquarum artium oratio, dicta in studiorum ad hiemem innovatione,” in *Humanismus und Renaissance in den deutschen Städten und an den Universitäten*, ed. Hans Rupprich (Darmstadt, 1964), pp. 172, 32–173, 2: “tertium quo profert pronuntiatque ea, quae cogitavit... quae ad loquendum pertinet, Graeci *logicen*, nostri rationalem, ... nominaverunt.”

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 173, 3–7: “Ordinem autem a rationali dicere... Primum tria sunt, quibus perfectae orationis munus absolvitur, ut emendata sit, ut probabilis, ut ornata, quorum integritas a grammatica petitur, fides a dialectica, a rhetorica cultus.”

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 174, 2–3: “Verum quia tres simul unum perficiunt absolvuntque eloquentiae corpus...”

in Agricola, eloquence is indeed the *vis vitae* of *logos*, that is of *ratio* and *oratio*, of thinking and speaking.

But the differentiation itself seems to allow for a different conclusion. In fact, when Agricola assigns basic knowledge of correct Latin, history and the *artes* to *grammar*,⁷³ as Guarino had done, and when he transfers, in contrast to Guarino, the business of excerpting, collecting and ordering *res* and *verba* from grammar or rhetoric to *dialectics* as being the art of *inventio*,⁷⁴ and when he finally attributes to *rhetoric* only the task of arranging the arguments into an argumentative unity (*dispositio* or *collocatio*), and of adorning the speech with adequate rhetorical figures and tropes (*elocutio*),⁷⁵ he seems to be conveying a reevaluation of dialectics, which takes over the handling of the *res* from rhetoric, which is reduced to the role of verbalizer.

And indeed, this impression is confirmed by the fact that, in the preface to his *De inventione dialectica*, Agricola argues for a clear-cut division of the three traditional tasks of the Orator, *docere*, *movere* and *delectare*,⁷⁶ transferring 'teaching,' *docere*, which he calls the basic scope of all kinds of speaking and writing, to dialectics,⁷⁷ and leaving to rhetoric only

⁷³ Ibid., p. 173, 8–16: "De grammatica quidem...ut singulis verbis origo, vis, proprietates reddenda, tam varia struendae orationis praecepta tenenda sint... Tam multos deinde oportet revolvat autores, omnem historiarum vetustatem teneat, rerum secreta, quae poetae fabulis involverunt, comprehendat. Et ut semel dicam: cunctarum prorsus artium si minus versanda penetralia, vestibulum tamen introspectendum, ut non immeritum dictum sit."

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 173, 17–28: "...in dialecticis quoque, ut promptissimi et in omnem partem flexibilis ingenii opus sit videre unicuique convenientia... Ipsa nanque viam aditumque omnium artium aperit et certos cuiusque rei locos inveniendae promit et signa, in quae defixo animo in promptu sit, quid pro quaque re contraque possit dici providere. Itaque mihi quidem sententia illorum minime videtur abhorrevere vero, qui quicquid orator sibi de inventione usurpat, id proprium esse dialecticae putant." For one of these *usurpatores*, see Lorenzo Valla, *Repastinatio Dialectice et Philosophie*, 2 Proemium, ed. Gianni Zippel, 1 (Padua, 1982), pp. 175–76.

⁷⁵ Agricola, "In laudem philosophiae," p. 173, 28–33: "Disponere autem, excolere et perpolire, quae quidem velut summam orationi manum rhetor imponit, ea proprie ad rhetoricam pertinere; sed haec ipsa tamen negotium felicitis naturae sunt, multae artis, longae exercitationis inter tantam rerum, locorum, temporum, dicentium, audientium varietatem nosse discrimen..."

⁷⁶ Agricola, *De inventione dialectica*, (see above, n. 64), p. 3: "Nec me praeterit maximis autorum placuisse, tria esse que perfecta oratione fiant: ut doceat, ut moveat, ut delectet, docere quidem rem facilem esse, & quam quisque tantum non inertissimae mentis praestare possit, concutere vero affectibus audientem & in quemcunque velis animi habitum transformare... non nisi summis & maiori quodam Musarum afflatu instinctis contingere ingeniis."

⁷⁷ Ibid.: "Oratio quaecunque de re quaque instituitur, omnisque adeo sermo, quo cogita mentis nostrae proferimus, id agere hocque primum et proprium habere videtur officium, ut doceat aliquid eum qui audit. Cuius rei quod certius quis propiusque capiat indicium,

movere and *delectare*, ‘moving and delighting,’ which he defines as accidental rather than essential qualities of perfect speaking.⁷⁸ In the middle of the sixteenth century, some thirty years after the first introduction of Agricola’s dialectics to university teaching, Petrus Ramus goes one step further and maintains that in addition to *inventio* the rhetorical task of *dispositio* or *collocatio* is a part of dialectics as well,⁷⁹ so that rhetoric is left with nothing more than *elocutio*.

Beyond rhetoric: the enduring turn

Does this mean that in the second part of the sixteenth century the rhetorical turn of humanism had come full circle and that, therefore, it had been a movement without consequence? I am not sure. In any case I doubt whether dialectics, after having absorbed the rhetorical tenets of *inventio* and *dispositio*, could remain what it had been before and whether it was able to render the same services as before. At least, the rhetorical paradigm had redefined the field of dialectics to include excerpting of texts and becoming familiar with the issues the texts were treating, and thus, dialectics was no longer an instrument of contemplative science that had trusted in the possibility of acquiring truth through interpretation of classical texts and reconstruction of their non-contradictory and consistent argumentation. The dialecticians had learned to excerpt the texts, that is, to destroy their texture, select the fragments and create a new order for the pieces selected according to the objectives they wanted to serve and the ideas they wanted to convey. The Quattrocento humanist Leon Battista Alberti compares the process of this rhetorically-inspired science to the formulation of a mosaic,

quam quod soli omnium animantium homini, ut rationis doctrinaeque capaci, parens ille & autor Deus, loquendi atque orationis indulserit munus?”

⁷⁸ Ibid.: “Nec sane inficias ivero, esse ista (sc. *movere* et *delectare*) praecipua bene dicendi praemia, sequique orationem: verum sequi verius quam effici, potiusque accessionem esse ipsius quam proprium opus.”

⁷⁹ Petrus Ramus, *Dialecticae institutiones* (1543; repr. Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1964), p. 5: “Dialectica virtus est disserendi, quod vi nominis intelligitur”; p. 7: “Excitat igitur in animis nostris natura (cum disceptationis occasio oblata est) geminos quosdam motus cum ad inveniendam rei dubie fidem subtiles et acutos, tum ad exprimendam & pro modo numeroque rerum collocandam, atque estimandam prudentes et moderatos”; p. 19: “itaque quoniam duce natura dispositionem quandam rerum inventarum sequimur in iudicando, iudicium ab eius imitatione definiamus, doctrinam res inventas collocandi & ea collocatione de re proposita iudicandi.”

a formulation that adheres to a strictly personal design;⁸⁰ the humanistically trained natural philosopher and medical doctor Nicolao Leonicensi proposes as the new model of science an arrangement of theorems akin to the method followed by the *artes*.⁸¹ One century later the German philosopher Bartholomaeus Keckermann, referring to Philipp Melanchthon and Johannes Sturm, recommends the substitution of the traditional way of teaching *textualiter*, that is, lecturing on the text of an author by annotating it and commenting on it, with the modern way of teaching *methodice* or *systematice*, where the teacher himself is forming the argumentative order of the discipline in accordance with its nature and scope.⁸² In all three

⁸⁰ Leon Battista Alberti, *Profugiorum ab aerumna libri III*, in *Opere volgari*, ed. Cecil Grayson 2 (Bari, 1966), pp. 160–61: “Così avviene presso de’ litterati. Gli ingegni d’Asia e massime e’ Greci, in più anni, tutti insieme furono inventori di tutte l’arte e discipline; e costrussero uno quasi tempio e domicilio in suoi scritti a Pallade e a quella Pronea, dea de’ filosofi stoici, ed estesero e’ pareti colla investigazione del vero e del falso: statuironvi le colonne col discernere e annotare gli effetti e forze della natura, apposervi el tetto quale difendesse tanta opera dalle tempeste avverse; e questa fu la perizia di fuggire el male, e appetire e conseguire el bene, e odiare el vizio, chiedere e amare la virtù.

Ma che interviene? Proprio el contrario da quel di sopra. Colui accolse e’ minuti rimasugli, e composene el pavimento. Noi vero, dove io come colui e come quell’altro volli ornare un mio picciolo e privato diversorio tolsi da quel pubblico e nobilissimo edificio quel che mi parse accommodato a’ miei disegni, e divisilo in più particelle distribuendole ove a me parse.

E quindi nacque come e’ dicono: *Nihil dictum quin prius dictum*. E veggonsi queste cose litterarie usurpate da tanti, e in tanti loro scritti adoperate e disseminate, che oggi a chi voglia ragionarne resta altro nulla che solo el raccogliere e assortirle e poi accoppiarle insieme con qualche varietà dagli altri e adattezza dell’opera sua, quasi come suo istituto sia imitare in questo chi altrove fece el pavimento. Qual cose, dove io le veggio aggiunte insieme in modo che le convengano con suoi colori a certa prescritta e designata forma e pittura, e dove io veggio fra loro niuna grave fissura, niuna deforme vacuità, mi diletta, e iudico nulla più doversi desiderare. Ma chi sarà sì fastidioso che non approvi e lodi costui, quale in sì compositissima opera pose sua industria e diligenza?”

⁸¹ Nicolaus Leonicensis (1428–1524), *De tribus doctrinis ordinatis secundum Galeni sententiam*, s.l./s.a. [Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, 4° Med.g.48^a/3] 12^v36–13^r6: “Haec Galeni verba aperte declarant quid sit notio finis apud ipsum scilicet finis artis alicuius mente conceptus ac desideratus, & quomodo sumpto a notione finis initio omnes artes secundum Methodum idest viam quandam atque ordinatum progressum constituuntur: Nam fine artis semel constituto atque proposito inveniuntur principia ac theoremata eiusdem artis per relationem ad finem. Ut enim Galenus inquit finis est regula & examen omnium que in quavis arte aut scientia traduntur. Illa enim principia atque theoremata artis esse dicuntur quae ad finem eius artis vel facilius vel citius assequendum utilia sunt, alioquin si nullum praestarent ad finem artis usum: ‘Nec theoremata quidem’ ut ait Galenus in libro qui *De optima doctrina* inscribitur ‘dicerentur.’”

⁸² Bartholomaeus Keckermann (1571–1609), *Praecognitorum Philosophicorum Libri duo, naturam philosophiae explicantes et rationem eius tum docendae tum discendae demonstrantes*, 2.2.1 (Hanoviae, 1612), p. 134: “*Systema sive Methodus eius disciplinae quam docere velis, exactissime construatur*. Duplex observatur docendi ratio in Scholis, Prior est, quando disciplinae alicuius systema sive methodus eiusmodi formatur, qualis ex ipsa disciplinae natura &

cases, the process is no longer contemplative but creative and productive, just as the orator is not the contemplator of a perfect text, but its creator. Thus it may well be—but it has to be the subject of further research—that the enduring result of the rhetorical turn of Renaissance humanism was a productive and creative approach to reality, which superseded the contemplative one in the course of the sixteenth century.

scopo formari velut in Idea debet. Altera ratio est, quando disciplinae textualiter tractantur, id est, quando textus alicuius veteris aut recentis auctoris annotationibus vel Commentariis vel dilatatur vel explanatur. Prior docendi ratio posteriori longissime praeferenda est; quia in explicando aliorum textu plerumque non potest Auditoribus praeferrri ea lux & fax Methodi, quam lucet in dextre conformatis Systematibus. Id quod & Phil. Melanchthon, Sturmius, & alii praestantes Doctores animadverterunt, ut suo loco citabimus.”

LITERARY HUMANISM IN THE RENAISSANCE

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One of the more memorable humanist portraits of the sixteenth century is that of the young Thomas Platter verbally painted by Lucien Febvre:

One day, when he was eighteen, Thomas Platter came to Sélestat. He could barely read. He went to the famous school of Johannes Sapidus. With a heroic effort he tried to clear the heavy layer of cobwebs from his brain. He carried on a single combat with the Latin grammar of Donatus. Soon he was employed as a teacher, half tutor, half valet, to the two sons of a bourgeois family. During the day he served his masters. At night, he studied alone, fighting sleep by putting cold water or raw turnips or pebbles in his mouth to put his teeth on edge so that he would wake immediately should he doze off. In this way he taught himself Latin, Greek, and a bit of Hebrew. His entire fortune consisted of a single gold coin which he spent without regret on a Hebrew Bible to be devoured in silence. But he had to earn his living and the duties of a private tutor did not please him. In Basle he became a rope-maker. . . . Platter, under the direction of a coarse and brutal master rope-maker, learned the trade. At night, he rose secretly and lighted a sputtering candle. By its uncertain light, and with the help of a Latin trot, he learned to read Homer in Greek. In the morning, he returned to his ropes. The strange workman did not pass unnoticed in Basle. One day the poor manual worker, Platter, engaged in his trade at Saint Peter's Square where he was helping to make a thick rope, was stopped in his work by none other than Beatus Rhenanus, the great Alsatian Humanist. He too was a simple man, one of those open and hard-working good giants of the early Renaissance. And, on another day, at the same spot, another man could be seen, a shrunken little fellow, almost lost in his great coat, Mister Desiderius Erasmus in person, the greatest, the prince, the king of Humanism. Like Rhenanus, he too offered Platter a more comfortable way of earning his living, a position as tutor. Platter refused. Like Zwingle, to mention only one example, Platter had a touching respect for manual labor. A little later another strange scene took place in Basle. Oporinus, the great printer, had also come to Platter and had obtained from him the promise that each day for an hour Platter would teach him Hebrew. Platter came to keep his promise. But in the agreed-upon place he found not Oporinus alone, but twenty people, learned men, pastors, magistrates, doctors, and even a Frenchman rich enough to have a silk cape and his own servant. The poor rope-maker was intimidated by this gathering and wanted to flee. Oporinus persuaded him to remain, to sit, to teach. And from then on, every evening he could be seen in that room, seated near the warmth

of the pottery stove in his leather workman's apron, his hands covered with calluses and sometimes bloody from his work, with his coarse, unkempt, bearded peasant's face, doing his best to teach those who gathered to learn what he [now] knew: Hebrew.¹

Such learning—of antique languages, of antique texts—was both contagious and epidemic: Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian; Caesar, Sallust, Pliny, and Ovid. The humanists' embracing of classical writers, their familiarity with them, began somewhat earlier—with Petrarch's discovery in 1333 of Cicero's *Pro Archia poeta* in Liège and, twelve years later, a manuscript of Cicero's *Epistulae ad Atticum* and his *Ad Quintum fratrem* and the *Ad Brutum* (6–18) in Verona. And these were only the first in a remarkable series of rediscovered Greek and Roman texts; the discoveries would continue through Salutati (1331–1406), who found Cicero's *Epistulae ad familiares*, and his protégé Poggio Bracciolini (1380–1459), who unearthed Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* and many other key works. Petrarch nevertheless remains today, as he did for the humanists, the epitome of the humanist scholar and student. In a letter to Luca da Penna, the papal secretary, in early 1374, he notes that from his very childhood, when other boys were yawning their way through Prosper or Aesop, he fell in love with Cicero either by instinct or through the urging of his father.² In an earlier letter to Boccaccio he describes his life as that of an exemplary humanist.

I have read and reread Virgil, Horace, Livy, Cicero, not once but a thousand times, not hastily but in repose, and I have pondered them with all the powers of my mind. I ate in the morning what I would digest in the evening; I swallowed as a boy what I would ruminate upon as a man. These writings I have so thoroughly absorbed and fixed, not only in my memory but in my very marrow, these have become so much a part of myself, that even though I should never read them again they would cling in my spirit, deep-rooted in its inmost recesses.³

Petrarch's enthusiasm was emulated by Lapo da Castiglionchio and others in Italy, by Guillaume Budé, Robert Estienne and others in France; by Núñez de Guzmán and others in Spain and by William Grocyn and John Colet in England. Reinforced by freshly discovered texts and swiftly

¹ Lucien Febvre, *Life in Renaissance France*, ed. and trans. Marian Rothstein (Cambridge, MA, 1977), pp. 34–37.

² The letter is trans. by Morris Bishop in *Letters from Petrarch* (Bloomington, 1966), pp. 292–99.

³ *Lettere di Francesco Petrarca*, ed. Giuseppe Fracasetti 4 (Florence, 1892), p. 422; Bishop, *Letters*, pp. 182–83.

expanding numbers of schools, Continental humanists and their English counterparts formulated a plan of lessons centered on the *trivium* of the *ars disserendi*, the arts of speaking correctly, speaking well, and arguing well. Together such verbal studies would train men to be ideal citizens through reasoning by Aristotelian *pisteis*, ‘modes of persuasion,’ as epitomized in the treatises of Cicero and the rhetorical handbook of Quintilian. “Speech is no small index of the mind,” Petrarch writes to Tommaso da Messina in 1333 or in 1350–51 (there is still some scholarly debate on this), “and the mind, no small guide for speech... the mind may learn to be reasonably severe in managing speech, and speech may learn to be truthfully magnificent in expressing the mind.”⁴ Through the *ars disserendi*, orators find the eloquence to persuade successfully. Salutati tells us that rhetors strive with all their power to reach this end: “It is certainly a great thing to embellish one’s writings with words and ideas, but the greatest accomplishment, and indeed the most difficult, is to bend the souls of one’s listeners as one wishes by means of a polished and weighty oration.”⁵ Such was no small matter, nor rare. George of Trebizond (Trapezuntius) notes in the fifth book of his *Five Books of Rhetoric* (1433 or 1434) that “rhetoric alone has undertaken the managing of private as well as public matters. For what could be thought up or said in the conduct of our affairs that does not require the power of oratory? In court, it defends what is right. In the Senate, it shows you both the useful and the useless. In public meetings, it has always protected the state as a whole. It teaches us to be provident and to avoid adverse things before they happen. If they should happen through chance or ignorance, rhetoric alone will come to our aid and will support us with hope or consolation.”⁶

Such a program of New Learning for Continental and English humanists thus emphasized the study of rhetoric as the keystone of the curriculum, an emphasis that led naturally, rapidly, and with surprising effectiveness to a particularly humanist poetics to be utilized and transformed throughout the sixteenth century, from the work of Erasmus and More through Marguerite of Navarre and Rabelais, to Philip Sidney and Cervantes, into a humanist fiction that relies on literary practices of fiction employed even today. Such a curriculum, beginning with Latin grammar and syntax, moved quickly (and

⁴ As translated in *Renaissance Debates on Rhetoric*, ed. and trans. Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithaca, NY, 2000), p. 15.

⁵ Salutati, “On Petrarch’s Eloquence,” trans. in Rebhorn, p. 20.

⁶ Trans. Rebhorn, p. 32.

nearly permanently) into a study of rhetoric, of declamations or *suasoriae* and of disputations or *controversiae*, as the chief means of exploring issues, defining subjects and positions, and determining action; in time it would also serve the writers of Renaissance humanist fiction as the basic formulation for exercising the imagination and determining belief. Renaissance students learned *syntaxis*, *figura*, and *prosodia*; a child of eleven or twelve in England could construe simple, compound, and complex Latin sentences; recognize a large number of figures of speech recorded in Quintilian, among others; and so rearrange his own writing constantly, and scan Latin verse in a variety of meters. This concern with form was taught simultaneously with matter—by reading texts of the ancients, children were taught to extract proverbial sayings, forceful passages, as *communes loci* that they were to copy into their individual commonplace books under appropriate subject headings, ready to draw on them for illustration, ready at hand to arrange and rearrange accretively, by accumulation, into *suasoriae* or *controversiae* that would persuade an audience that had also been shaped, as Aristotle taught, by defining *ethos*, or the character of the speaker, the persona, and *pathos*, the mood and definition of the auditors.

All of these rhetorical elements—arrangement of common places, persona, and audience—were captured in the lessons of *suasoriae* taken from Seneca the Elder. Here students learned the rhetorical—but also the clearly literary—devices of *prosopographia* and *prosopopeia*. The first one of these, an impersonation of an historical individual, is illustrated by this example from the elder Seneca: when Alexander debates whether to sail the ocean (as the Loeb edition translates it) and the student must imagine himself one of the sailors, or imagine himself Alexander wishing to go, or, again, to imagine himself as Alexander's mother wishing to prevent his going. In other exercises, Seneca the Elder asks the student to take the part of a Spartan at Thermopylae pressing his companions to stand and fight the Persians or else urging them to retreat; in still another exercise, the speaker, now in the persona of Agamemnon, tells Calchas why he refuses to sacrifice more imagined *prosopopeia*, what George Puttenham in *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589) calls the feigning of a person who is fictional but made to seem real, or, as Angel Day has it in his *Declaration of all such Tropes, Figures, or Schemes* (1592), “when to things without life we frame an action, speech, or person, fitting a man” (1595 ed., sig. Mm4). Such imaginative creations, following hard on the heels of imagining re-creators, result in Raphael Hythlodæus and the persona-More, Gargantua and Pantagruel, Pyrocles and Musidorus, Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. A more contained imaginary exercise, but nevertheless the

seedbed for Renaissance literary fiction spawned by humanist training and culture, was the writing of letters in the Renaissance schoolrooms and with humanist tutors. English grammar schools followed Erasmus' *Modus conscribendi epistolas*, illustrated for us in the statutes for Rivington grammar school where students are put to work:

Devising and writing sundry epistles, to sundry persons, of sundry matters, as of chiding, exhorting, comforting, counseling, praying, lamenting; some to friends, some to foes, some to strangers of weighty matters, or merry, as shooting, hunting, etc.; of adversity, or prosperity, or war and peace, divine and profane, of all sciences and occupations, some long and some short.⁷

A number of English texts, too, such as William Fulwood's *Enimie of Idlennesse* (1586), a translation of *Le stile et maniere de composer, dicter, et escrire toute d'epistre* (Lyons, 1566), gave further examples.

Grammar schools taught rhetoric not only by epistles but also by themes, again following models; here the standard text was Aphthonius, *Progymnasmata* (1520), translated into Latin by Reinhard Lorich in 1542 and later into English by Richard Rainolde in 1563. The book contained nineteen classical themes for imitation in Rainolde's collection: Aesop's fables of the ant and the grasshopper and the shepherd and the wolves as well as historical speeches by Richard III and Julius Caesar, a confutation of the battle of Troy, the description of Xerxes, and "A narration Poeticall vpon a Rose" (sig. D4). Such exercises grew progressively more difficult, all the while reinforcing by practice the art of *ethopoeia*, or impersonations (sig. N1) for themes or theses (we might call them "stories") on things uncertain or fictitious (sig. O1). And after epistles and themes came orations—full-blown speeches of praise or dispraise, or of arguing justice or of advocating action. They had seven parts—*exordium* (or the warm-up, an attractive or amusing introduction), *propositio* (or central theme), *partitio* (the various portions of the proposition needing examination), the *confirmatio* (or basic argument), the *refutatatio* (refuting the opposition), the *conclusio* (reinforcing the position taken or the idea advocated), and the *peroratio* (the memorable wrap-up). Again, such a rhetorical form became literary: in Hythlodæus' long descriptive praise of Utopia; Panurge's commentary on the frozen words; Pamela's stout defense of women's chastity (and her own!); Don Quixote's defense of chivalric values in a post-chivalric age. Such orations could also, follow-

⁷ This summary is from J. Howard Brown, *Elizabethan Schooldays* (Oxford, 1933), p. 78.

ing Plato's original, turn into *symposia*, as they do in two major works of Renaissance fiction: Marguerite's *Heptameron* and Castiglione's *Il libro del Cortegiano*.

And the development, from commonplace to epistle to theme to oration, was extended to disparate and even opposing themes and orations on the same topic. "Rhetoric produced individuals predisposed to approach any subject by taking a side, because they were not formally trained to do anything else: any side, perhaps, but some side certainly," Walter J. Ong comments. "The life of the mind was exciting because it was framed in conflict."⁸ In the Renaissance classroom this meant studying classical *controversiae*, fixed paradoxes presented by ambiguous or contradictory (but often actual) Roman laws that gave formal models for disputations. Such *controversiae*—really the heart of Renaissance dialogue as well as fictional argument and debate, such as that between Don Quixote and Sancho—are also presented by Seneca the Elder, Seneca Rhetor. According to the pseudo-Cicero in the *Ad Herennium* 1.12.20, they are often couched in the inherent multiplicity of meanings that a copious rhetoric shares with fiction when it turns narrative situations or language into dialogue, ambiguity, and even metaphor:

A controversy is created by Ambiguity when a text presents two or more meanings, as follows: The father of a family, when making his son his heir, in his will bequeathed silver vessels to his wife: "Let my heir give my wife thirty pounds' weight of silver vessels, 'such as shall be selected.'" After his death the widow asks for some precious vessels of magnificent relief-work. The son contends that he owes her thirty pounds' weight of vessels "such as shall be selected" *by him*. Here is a Legal Issue established from Ambiguity.⁹

Leonard Coxe, in his *Arte or craft of Rhetoryke*, cites another instance in the case of a man who leaves to each of his two maiden daughters 100 sheep to be delivered to them on the days of marriage "suche as they wyll": here, he asks, does "they" refer to daughters or to the executors who have kept the sheep (sigs. F4–F4v)? While it is easy to assume that such debates lead to the kind of discussions in Marguerite and debates in Sidney, from rhetoric in the classroom to Renaissance fiction itself, we have direct evidence that writers found these in a playful competition

⁸ Walter J. Ong, *Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology* (Ithaca, NY, 1971), pp. 65, 66.

⁹ *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, ed. and trans. Harry Caplan (Loeb Classical Library) (Cambridge, MA, 1999).

between Erasmus and More concerning tyrannicide found in Cicero's *De inventione* 2.49.144:

Law: A tyrannicide shall receive the reward commonly given to victors at the Olympic games and he shall ask the magistrate for whatever he wishes, and the magistrate shall give it to him. Another law: When a tyrant has been slain the magistrate shall execute his five nearest blood relations. Alexander, who had set himself up as a tyrant at Pherae in Thessaly, was killed by his wife, named Thebe, at night, when he was in bed with her. She demands as a reward her son whom she had by the tyrant. Some say that the boy ought to be executed according to law. The case is brought before a court.¹⁰

Erasmus and More also vied in translating Lucian; both doubtless contributed to the rival works we know best, the *Encomium Moriae* (or *In Praise of More* or *The Praise of Folly*) and *Utopia* (or Eutopia, Nowhere-at-all or Ideal Land). Both, that is, may have laid the groundwork for what can be considered early rhetorical works of fiction, of the imagination.

But humanist learning was always more than rulebooks and practice exercises. It was also, conceptually, a matter of imitation, or *imitatio*. As for the humanist tutors, to teach was to exemplify, so to write was to emulate. Such a doctrine is set forth in Letter 65 of Seneca:

All art is but imitation of nature; therefore, let me apply these statements of general principles to the things which have to be made by man. A statue, for example, has afforded matter which was to undergo treatment at the hands of the artist, and has had an artist who was to give form to the matter. Hence, in the case of the statue, the material was bronze, the cause was the workman. And so it goes with all things,—they consist of that which is made, and the maker. The Stoics believe in one cause only,—the maker; but Aristotle thinks that the word “cause” can be used in three ways: “The first cause,” he says, “is the actual matter, without which nothing can be created. The second is the workman. The third is the form, which is impressed upon every work,—a statue, for example.” This last is what Aristotle calls the *idea* [or what Sidney, in his *Defence of Poetrie*, will call the “the fore-conceit”]. “There is, too,” says he [that is Aristotle], “a fourth,—the purpose of the work as a whole.”... To these Plato adds a fifth cause,—the pattern which he himself calls the “idea”: for it is this that the artist gazed upon when he created the work which he had decided to carry out. Now it makes no difference whether he has his pattern outside himself, that he may direct his glance to it, or within himself, conceived and placed there by himself.... [So] in the case of the statue,—to go back to the figure with which we

¹⁰ Cicero, *De inventione*, trans. H.M. Hubbell (Loeb Classical Library) (Cambridge, MA, 1976).

began,—the material is the bronze, the agent is the artist, the make-up is the form which is to be adapted to the material, the model is the pattern imitated by the agent, the end in view is the purpose in the maker's mind, and finally, the result of all these is the statue itself.¹¹

In Epistle 7, Pliny goes even farther:

It may not be amiss when you have read only so much of an author at once, as to carry in your head his subject and argument, to turn, as it were, his rival, and write something on the same topic; then compare your performance and his, and minutely examine in what points either of you or he most happily succeeded. It will be a matter of very pleasing congratulation to yourself, if you shall find that in some things you have the advantage of him, as it will be a great mortification if he should rise above you in all. (7.9).

This unresolved sense of imitation—or even of speaking well—as emulation and rivalry is at the very heart of Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, but it is also there, if somewhat more distantly, in Marguerite's *Heptaméron* and in Rabelais' great sprawling untitled fiction. *Imitatio*, moreover, need not be limited to a single prototype. As Pliny himself writes to Arrianus somewhat earlier, he learned to write best by combining Demosthenes, Calvus, and Cicero (1.2).¹²

The act of *imitatio*, then, seems from nearly the beginning to be a matter not merely of *copying*, but of improving, combining, transforming, and hence *creating*. And what is inherent not merely in Pliny's acknowledgement but doubtless in the practice of *imitatio* generally among the ancients becomes an openly proclaimed *poetic* in Cicero. At one point, he is talking about the painter Zeuxis of Heraclea, who was considered in his time the best of all artists but who painted, Cicero tells us, by selecting many models so as to create an ideal that is at best a composite of what is before him. This, says Cicero, is the way all forms of art—including rhetoric and poetry and fiction—should proceed.¹³ So too Macrobius in the Preface to his *Saturnalia*:

We ought in some sort to imitate the bees, and just as they, in their wanderings to and fro, sip the flowers, then arrange their spoil and distribute it among the combs, and transform the various juices to a single flavor by in some way mixing with them a property of their own being, so I too shall put into

¹¹ Seneca, *Epistulae morales*, trans. Richard Gummere (Loeb Classical Library) (Cambridge, MA, 1925).

¹² Pliny, *Letters*, trans. William Melmoth, rev. W.M.L. Hutchinson (Loeb Classical Library) (Cambridge, MA, 1918, 1968).

¹³ Cicero, *De inventione*, 2.2.4–5.

writing all that I have acquired in the varied course of my reading, to reduce it thereby to order and to give it coherence. For not only does arrangement help the memory, but the actual process of arrangement, accompanied by a kind of mental fermentation which serves to season the whole, blends the diverse extracts to make a single flavor; with the result that, even if the sources are evident, what we get in the end is still something clearly different from those known sources.¹⁴

Macrobius goes on to make further analogies with eating food (and digesting food of the mind), preparing unguents, or singing in a choir.¹⁵ Such *assimilations* of models result in a process that *changes* them, that produces *something new*. It is this new product, new work of art, that the artist thus *creates*, a work in which the sources have become so absorbed, or digested, as to have receded from sight so that only the newly created composite remains. In *Il libro del Cortegiano*, Bembo will argue that this transformation will lead to nothing short of a mystical experience; Oisille, in *L'Heptaméron*, will argue that such acts of *imitatio*, when properly conceived, will lead to a reformation of the soul and spirit; and Don Quixote, in his mad composite of Roldán and Amadís de Gaula will create a new sense of Knight-errantry, which, however foolish or mad, nevertheless will become *effective just because* of its newness, its strangeness, its divergence. Indeed, the sense of creativity through *imitatio* that the Quattrocento and Cinquecento inherited from their classical past as the Tudors did from theirs, was itself transformed by the modifying—the intervening, diverging—poetic redefined by Petrarch. It comes, perhaps not unexpectedly, in a letter to Boccaccio written from Pavia on October 28, 1366:

A proper imitator should take care that what he writes resembles the original *without reproducing it*. The resemblance should not be that of a portrait to the sitter—in that case the closer the likeness is the better—but it should be the resemblance of a son to his father. Therein is often a great divergence in particular features, but there is a certain suggestion, what our painters call an “air,” most noticeable in the face and eyes, which makes the resemblance. As soon as we see the son, he recalls the father to us, although if we should measure every feature we should find them all different. But there is a mysterious something there that has this power.¹⁶

The successful art of *imitatio* is not simply the newly created composite that diverges successfully from particular features of its source(s) but

¹⁴ Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, ed. Franciscus Eyssenhardt (Leipzig, 1895), pp. 2–3; trans. Percival Vaughan Davies (New York, 1969), p. 27.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 5–8.

¹⁶ Bishop, *Letters*, pp. 198–99, emphasis mine.

one in which the audience may see the residual traces of the original, which has been the initial impulse or model. The *significatio*, that is, now lies precisely in charting what the divergence is (and, consequently, why and how). Folly's tumbling catalogue (which mixes but does not hide its sources from the secular to the sacred) in Erasmus' portrayal through speech, Panurge's speeches, and Don Quixote's actions will all creatively teach us when to recognize what is being transformed. The divergence itself points to the essential meaning. This may at first seem retrogressive, but it is the natural, possibly the necessary and sole legacy for a culture that is digging back into the antique texts for new self-identification. Such a humanist poetics of creative imitation based in divergence from resources cherishes and preserves both the old text and the new.

Humanist poetics, therefore, rhetorically conceived, is always aimed at an audience and is incomplete without one; it demands interpretations that lie, ultimately, beyond the presentation of probability, of *eikos*, that is meant to be persuasive. Such an art is necessarily and essentially triangular, playing off its oppositions against the interpreting, adjudicating audience, which may choose one interpretation over another, may reject both, or may attempt to mediate between them. To help in such judging, the audiences at disputations, like their successors, the readers of texts, needed to hold up the argument against what experience had taught them, and it is only an extension of this awareness that caused most humanist education to test theory with practice, precept with travel. There was a sense in which precept needed to be put into practice, Sidney's fore-conceit combined with his praxis, the reading of books with tours about Europe. Rabelais' fiction, where crucial ties between proper education and wise and eloquent citizenship in Books 1 and 2 give way, in the later books, to the need to find instruction in foreign and increasingly fabulous territories of the human mind and spirit, just as Don Quixote and Sancho Panza begin in La Mancha but travel to Barataria and beyond: even firmly positioned in the parlor at Urbino, Castiglione's characters travel with Bembo into the world beyond their sharply constricted quarters. Humanist poetics is a poetics of discovery as well as of recovery, both inductive and deductive. Or, as Richard A. Lanham says, seeing it carried on in later years by the Inns of Court in England, it provides "a world of contingent purpose, of perpetual cognitive dissonance, plural orchestration."¹⁷

¹⁷ Richard A. Lanham, *The Motives of Eloquence: Literary Rhetoric in the Renaissance* (New Haven, CT, 1976), p. 7.

Put another way, then, the humanist poetic work—fiction, poetry, epistle, but also sermon, parliamentary speech, essay—is mediate, standing, in the art of triangulation, between the original (or implied original) and the receiver (or audience). It functions just as Sidney will say, through his extensive discussion in the *Defence of Poetrie*, between the indeterminate abstractions of Philosophy and the overly-determined facts of history, between feigned burgesses of Athens who speak of points of highest knowledge which lay hidden to the world and historians who put into the mouths of kings and captains speeches they never made. The former are like blind astronomers, who always looking beyond where they are, are forever in danger of falling into a ditch, while the historians are obsessed only with mouse-eaten records of the past. The mediating rhetor of creative work is the poet, whose metaphors also mediate the Greek role of the poet as prophet or seer and the Roman understanding of the poet as a maker or imitator of the real, by *mimesis*. As Sidney puts it,

The skill of [the] artificer standeth in that *Idea*, or fore-conceit, of the work, and not in the work itself. And that the poet hath that *Idea* is manifest by delivering them forth in such excellency as he hath imagined them, which delivering forth also is *not* wholly imaginative, as we are wont to say, by them that build castles in the air, but so far *substantially* it worketh, not only to make a Cyrus, which had been but a particular excellency, as nature might have done, but to bestow a Cyrus upon the world to make many CyruSES, if they will learn aright why and how that maker made him.¹⁸

The poet's language is attractive—"he cometh to you with words set in delightful proportion, either accompanied with or prepared for the well-enchanting skill of music, and with a tale, forsooth, he cometh unto you, with a tale which holdeth children from play and old men from the chimney corner"—but his starting-point is "the conceits of the mind, which is [also the beginning and] the end of speech."¹⁹

There is perhaps no simpler illustration of how the poetics derived in the Renaissance from its study of poetics than in Thomas More's *Utopia* which asks the reader to mediate between the *controversia* of Book I and the *suasoria* of Book II. And even within that *suasoria* the reader needs to be alert to the inconsistencies which force him to work out its meaning, generally in the undermining of the oration presented by the proud, indefatigable Hythlodæus. He begins, for instance, by telling us that

¹⁸ Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry*, ed. Peter C. Herman (Glen Allen, VA, 2001), p. 65, emphasis mine.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 84 and 123.

The Ilande of Vtopia. conteyneth in breadthe in the myddell of it (for there it is brodest) CC. miles. Whiche bredthe continueth through the most parte of the lande. Sauyng that by lytle and lytle it commeth in, and waxeth narrower towards both the endes. Whiche fetchyng about a circuite or compasse of .vc. myles, do fasson the hole Ilande lyke to the newe mone (trans. Robynson, 1551, sigs. G5–G5v).

The image he creates is placid, a small island surrounding protected waters. It is a land characterized by pleasure and virtue, by “bewtye, strengthe, nemblenes” (sig. M6). But the island also images Luna, which for More’s day shone with borrowed, not original light and signified inconstancy and minor misfortune. Beyond that, Hythlodæus’ account is in factual error: if there is indeed a crescent shape and an inner bay, then the greatest breadth of land must be substantially less than the diameter of the circumference, or approximately 160 miles (500 pi), or there would be no bay. Thomas More, in the fictional presence of an authentic close friend Cuthbert Tunstall (sig. B1), vice-chancellor, master of the rolls, and later author of a popular book on arithmetic, *De arte supputandi libri quattuor* (1522), would surely know that. So either the shape of the island has been misjudged by Hythlodæus or the dimensions are wrong; he cannot have it both ways. Nor can he possibly allow 54 cities of 645 square miles each as he reports exist on an island of only 31,000 square miles. Such an inconsistency might slip past some readers but others follow forcing the reader, in an art of triangulation, to distrust Hythlodæus and thus to be alert to the wisdom of what he calls the perfect land. For instance, the Utopians, we are told, believe in a beneficent nature (and love mankind); yet, led by the eponymous King Utopia, their first historic acts are to cut themselves from the mainland, to raise a garrison in the midst of their bay, and to allow hidden rocks there to destroy strangers; their history begins in divisiveness, military defensiveness, and planned treachery. They emphasize personal freedom yet draft young men into agricultural service, all city men into harvesting crops each year, and all men and women into learning some craft under supervision, and they remain partially dependent on slavery. They scorn luxury, yet their children wear jewelry—learn, that is, and indulge a taste for adornment. They eat flesh but despise any form of butchery. They argue for pleasure of a high order, but Hythlodæus’ word for it, *voluptas*, means sensual gratification. They desire peace, yet they have no hesitation in annexing territory not their own; they claim selflessness yet remain imperialistic. Such irrationalities—statements working metaphorically for the testing, skeptical reader—can grow comic. Chickens born from incubators follow

human beings as their parents, and slaves are chained in gold, the softest of metals, saving iron, actually needful in war, to fashion chamberpots. Surely C.S. Lewis makes the desired point as reader when he notes that “as long as we take the *Utopia* for a [serious] philosophical treatise it will ‘give’ wherever we lean our weight.”²⁰

In a study published recently, *Proteus Unmasked*, Trevor McNeely argues that such a mediating poetics was vital to a society that saw rhetoric both as educational and as treacherous because it could be deceptive and manipulative as well as insightful and instructive. “Rhetoric,” he writes,

straddles that border between politics and art. Thus, the point that rhetoric has its application in the real world is a point that *must be made* by exponents of the art: truth demands it; but on the other hand it is not a point that can be emphasized in any way, for to do so would be to approach much too close to the dangerous shoals of politics, where rhetoric can become quite literally a question of life and death. The autonomy of the academy is thus protected by the avoidance of this question in all but the most cursory way, while the real work of manipulative politics carries on unimpeded, *ex obliquo*, in Bacon’s phrase, at the same time.²¹

Perhaps so; perhaps that is why a rhetorical poetics became so popular, as well as so vital, to a Renaissance humanist culture. It insisted that any final meaning rest in its audience.

But there is also something else this rhetorical poetics provided that Pico della Mirandola, from the start, saw as essentially valuable. “Let them marvel at us,” he writes to Ermolao Barbaro,

as wise in inquiring into things, as careful in exploring them, subtle in contemplating them, grave in judging, fully engaged in making syntheses, handy at analysis. Let them marvel at the brevity of our style, pregnant with matters many and great; at our most abstruse opinions, expressed in accessible words, that are full of questions as well as solutions; at how fit we are, how well trained, to remove ambiguities, to dissolve difficulties, to smooth out the convoluted, to weaken false matters with mind-bending syllogisms, and to confirm the true with them.

By these means, Ermolao, we have preserved our memory from oblivion thus far and do not doubt to preserve it in the future.²²

²⁰ C.S. Lewis, *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama* (Oxford, 1954), pp. 168–69.

²¹ Trevor McNeely, *Proteus Unmasked: Sixteenth-Century Rhetoric and the Art of Shakespeare* (Bethlehem, PA, 2004), pp. 30–31.

²² Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, “Letter to Ermolao Barbaro,” trans. Rebhorn, p. 61.

Like Cicero in the *De Oratore* and *Brutus*, Pico finds the active role of the reader, of the rhetor's audience, that of preserving the artifact, defeating oblivion. We who have inherited the poetic works of Erasmus and More, of Castiglione and Rabelais, of Sidney and Cervantes, know how true that is. Their rhetorical poetics has created—and *preserved*—the literary work of the Renaissance.

PART THREE

PETRARCH: FOUNDER OF RENAISSANCE HUMANISM?*

Angelo Mazzocco

While interpreting Petrarch's notion of the *renovatio Romae*—that is to say, Petrarch's reasoning on the rebirth of classical Roman civilization—modern scholars have posited some provocative and interesting queries: Was Petrarch's *renovatio* sufficiently unique and original to make its author the founder of Renaissance humanism? What criteria should one use in assessing his *renovatio*? Should one view it solely in stylistic terms or should one also consider ideological matters? In other words, is Petrarch's *renovatio* limited to the rhetorical and stylistic sphere, or does it extend also into the realm of ideas and cultural phenomena? That modern scholars should disagree on the actual meaning and role of Petrarch's *renovatio* is logical enough, given that Petrarch's thought was characterized by conflicting ideological tendencies.¹ The contrasting messages that often emerge from these competing ideas have led modern scholars to formulate contradictory interpretations of his reasoning on the rebirth of classical Roman civilization. An important point of contention that has resulted from this controversy is the assertion that Petrarch was not the initiator of classical rebirth. To be sure many a modern scholar credits Petrarch with chronological priority in the field of classical renewal;² nevertheless, since the Second World War, Petrarch's role in the field of classical rebirth has been

* A shorter version of this paper was delivered at the Yale University symposium, "Petrarch (1304–2004): The Power of the Word," 23–24 September 2004 in New Haven, CT.

¹ On the elusive and contradictory nature of Petrarch's thought see, among others, Giuseppe Mazzotta, "Ambivalence of Power," in his *The Worlds of Petrarch* (Durham, NC, 1993), pp. 181–192; Eugenio Garin, "Petarca latino," *Quaderni petrarcheschi*, 9–10 (1992–1993), 8; and Michele Feo, "Politicità del Petrarca," *Quaderni petrarcheschi*, 9–10 (1992–1993), 115.

² For example, in a statement representative of an important segment of twentieth-century scholarship on Petrarch, Berthold Ullman notes that Petrarch "was the most remarkable figure among the early humanists, a man far ahead of his time and one who, in spite of all reservations, may still fittingly be called the first modern man." *Studies in the Italian Renaissance* (Rome, 1955), p. 30. Analogous points of view are found also in Pierre de Nolhac, *Petrarque et l'humanisme*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1907) 2: 1–126; Herbert Weisinger, "Who Began the Revival of Learning? The Renaissance Point of View." *Papers of the Michigan Academy* 29 (1943): 561–67; Charles E. Trinkaus, *The Scope of Renaissance Humanism* (Ann Arbor, MI,

revised significantly. Though he is still seen as an important figure of the humanist movement, he is no longer viewed as its founder.

Unlike modern scholars, the humanists of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries showed little disagreement when addressing Petrarch's view of *renovatio*. In fact, the humanists were almost unanimous in arguing that Petrarch was the sole initiator of classical rebirth. Their consensus was due, to a large extent, to the *modus operandi* they used in assessing Petrarch's rediscovery of classical antiquity. While reconstructing Petrarch's notion of *renovatio* they went beyond those elements of his literary production that are imbued with spiritual conflicts and that convey reservations about the ancient world and focused instead on those works that constitute a clear praise and emulation of classical culture. In other words, while reconstructing Petrarch's notion of *renovatio* they extracted it from its numerous philosophical and religious incrustations, and in so doing they formulated a perception of his classical rebirth that is historically viable and culturally more inclusive. The scope of this essay is to reexamine Petrarch's *renovatio*, that is to say the poet's contribution to Renaissance humanism, in light of the revision it has undergone since the Second World War and in view of the humanists' assessment of it. As such the essay will look at some key modern scholars who have questioned Petrarch's chronological priority in the area of classical rebirth and compare their views with those of several major Italian and non-Italian humanists who have confirmed it.

Roberto Weiss was the first scholar to provide a significant challenge to Petrarch's chronological priority in the area of classical renewal.³ In a seminal study, *The Dawn of Humanism in Italy*, delivered as the inaugural lecture to the British Academy in 1942 but first published in 1947,⁴ Weiss noted that Petrarch was not the initiator of the humanist movement, notwithstanding the humanists' claim to the contrary: "It was common belief among fifteenth century humanists, that Petrarch had been the turning point in the breakaway from the old tradition. In his *Italia illustrata*, completed

1983), pp. 11–15; Ugo Dotti, *Vita di Petrarca* (Bari, 1987), pp. 419–20; and Garin, "Petrarca latino," pp. 4–7.

³ Pre-Petrarchan humanism was treated also by Natalino Sapegno in his *Il Trecento* (Milan, 1981; first published in 1934), pp. 151–61. But in Sapegno it lacks the sharp definition it acquires in Weiss. Sapegno sees it as prehumanism rather than as a cultural movement in its own right.

⁴ Roberto Weiss, *The Dawn of Humanism in Italy* (London, 1947; repr. New York, 1970).

in 1453, Biondo Flavio pointed in fact to Petrarch as the initiator of the new literary fashions.” Weiss goes on to remark that Biondo’s view

is a view from which we have hardly disentangled ourselves completely even now. . . . As a matter of fact, Petrarch and Boccaccio did not start Italian humanism, for the simple reason that it already existed before them. This does not, however, diminish their achievement. For although they relied to some extent on the foundations laid down by earlier humanists, they nevertheless succeeded in erecting upon them a noble building.⁵

Weiss lists several pre-Petrarchan scholars, such as Lovato dei Lovati, Geremia da Montagnone, and Albertino Mussato in Padua, Benzo d’Alessandria and Giovanni de Matociis (commonly known as Giovanni Mansionario) in Verona, and Geri d’Arezzo and Francesco da Barberino in Florence, who, he argues, displayed scholarly skills and engaged in intellectual pursuits that have historically been associated solely with Petrarch. In fact, speaking of the Paduan group, he observes that these scholars successfully combined legal duties with the pursuit of the humanities. Thus, Lovato dei Lovati, a judge, wrote a Latin poem on Tristan and Iseult and studied Seneca’s *Tragedies*, providing a valuable account of their metric structure. Likewise Geremia da Montagnone, a judge like Lovato, produced a valuable *Florilegium* modeled on the *Digest*, whose range of texts quoted “went well beyond what was usually available during the later Middle Ages.”⁶ By far the most successful of the Paduan humanists was Albertino Mussato, Lovato’s disciple. Mussato made use of the stylistic tenets of the ancient historians, Caesar, Sallust, but especially Livy, while writing his histories on the expedition of Emperor Henry VII in Italy (*De gestis Henrici VII Cesaris*). More importantly, he made Seneca’s *Tragedies* a model for his *Ecerinis*, a tragedy which dramatizes the rise and fall of Ezzelino da Romano but which was intended to warn the Paduans of the threats posed by Cangrande della Scala. The *Ecerinis* earned him the laurel crown, the bestowal of which revived a custom that had been forgotten since antiquity. Weiss goes on to note that important humanistic traits are found also in the Veronese Benzo d’Alessandria, who, in a Petrarch-like fashion, undertook extensive journeys in search of ancient texts and subjected his findings to textual criticism, and in Giovanni de Matociis, whose *Historia imperialis* reveals “critical powers quite unusual among scholars of

⁵ Weiss, *The Dawn of Humanism in Italy*, p. 3.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

his days.⁷ As for the Tuscan Geri d'Arezzo, he assembled a rich epistolary, which, like that of Petrarch, was written in Latin and was replete with classical quotations. Given that their works were imbued with a strong classical spirit, these scholars, Weiss argues, deserve to be acknowledged as humanists. Indeed, they originated this important cultural movement and gave it its *raison d'être*.

The line of thought and the type of research on pre-Petrarchan humanists begun by Weiss were continued by Giuseppe and Guido Billanovich. In a series of publications that go back to the early 1950s, the Billanoviches reconsider the chronological boundaries of Italian humanism, and in so doing they give detailed accounts of the lives and works of the pre-Petrarchan humanists of northeastern Italy. They discuss the socio-political forces that molded their works as well as their philological skills, their antiquarian interests, their appropriation and emulation of classical criteria, and their role in the context of the humanist movement.⁸ For example, Giuseppe Billanovich argues that Italian humanism originated in the later decades of the thirteenth century rather than in the middle of the fourteenth century. Indeed, between the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries there flourished in northeastern Italy a number of scholars who engaged in the type of rhetorical, philological, and antiquarian activities that are peculiar to what we have come to characterize as humanism (*che noi posteri chiamiamo umanesimo*).⁹ Billanovich adds that this sort of scholarship had traditionally been considered the sole domain of Petrarch and his followers.¹⁰ The time frame of Italian humanism has been a concern of Carlo Dionisotti as well. In a crucial study on Italian humanism, "Discorso sull'umanesimo italiano," which was first published in 1956 with a reprint in 1967, Dionisotti notes that when he first began his study of humanistic culture he believed that there was an historical period with particular cultural traits that could be characterized as humanism, but that

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 13. On Giovanni de Matociis cfr. Roberto Weiss, *The Renaissance Discovery of Classical Antiquity* (New York, 1973), pp. 22–24.

⁸ Giuseppe Billanovich, *I primi umanisti e le tradizioni dei classici latini* (Freiburg, Switzerland, 1953); idem, "I primi umanisti e l'antichità classica," in *Classical Influence on European Culture A.D. 500–1500*, ed. R.R. Bolgar (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 57–66; idem, "La cultura veneta nel medioevo," *Italia medioevale e umanistica* 20 (1977), 1–18; and Guido Billanovich, "Il preumanesimo padovano," *Storia della cultura veneta: Il Trecento*, 2 vols. (Vicenza, 1976) 2:19–110.

⁹ Billanovich, "La cultura veneta," p. 7.

¹⁰ Billanovich, "I primi umanisti," pp. 57–65 and "La cultura veneta," pp. 6–17.

thirty years later, at the time of the writing of this article, he was doubtful of the time frame as well as of the essential characteristics of humanism. Be that as it may, the solid archeological and philological research carried out in the field of humanistic culture in the 1940s and 1950s had demonstrated that Italian humanism originated between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; that is to say, it originated before Petrarch.¹¹

Important information on pre-Petrarchan humanism is found also in Paul Oskar Kristeller. Indeed, in a classic essay, “Humanism and Scholasticism in the Italian Renaissance,” published early in his scholarly career (1945), which is often cited as being representative of his extensive work on Italian humanism,¹² Kristeller does express views that parallel in some ways those of Weiss and the Billanoviches. He argues in this piece that Italian humanism arose toward the end of the thirteenth century and that, contrary to the view of most modern scholars, it was not strictly speaking an enterprise in classical scholarship nor was it a new philosophical movement that came into being in opposition to medieval Scholasticism. To be sure the humanists did exhibit a strong interest in classical scholarship, but their interest in this field of study was subservient to their passion for eloquence:

The humanists were not classical scholars who for personal reasons had a craving for eloquence, but, vice versa, they were professional rhetoricians, heirs and successors of the medieval rhetoricians, who developed the belief, then new and modern, that the best way to achieve eloquence was to

¹¹ Its having originated at this time, however, did not mean that it included Dante: “Nè certo occorre far di Dante un umanista.” Indeed, not just Dante, but the vernacular literature of Petrarch and Boccaccio also needed to be excluded from the history of Italian humanism: “Fino a contraria prova, che non credo possibile, opere come le *Rime sparse* e il *Decameron*, per non dire della *Commedia*, in una storia dell’Umanesimo italiano non si inquadrano.” Carlo Dionisotti, “Discorso sull’umanesimo italiano,” in his *Geografia e storia della letteratura italiana* (Turin, 1967), pp. 179–99 at 183 and 184.

¹² See, among others, Jerrold E. Seigel, *Rhetoric and Philosophy in Renaissance Humanism. The Union of Eloquence and Wisdom, Petrarch to Valla* (Princeton, 1968), p. 32 n. 3; Trinkaus, *The Scope of Renaissance Humanism*, p. 52; Ronald G. Witt, ‘In the Footsteps of the Ancients’: *The Origins of Humanism from Lovato to Bruni* (Leiden, 2000), pp. 2–3; and Robert Black, ed., *Renaissance Thought: A Reader* (London, 2001), p. 71. It should be noted that on the whole Kristeller’s thesis on Renaissance humanism is less restrictive than it appears in this piece. On this see Introduction above, pp. 13–15. “Humanism and Scholasticism in the Italian Renaissance” is based on a lecture delivered at Brown University on December 14, 1944. It was first published in *Byzantion* 17 (1944–1945), 346–74. It has been reprinted numerous times in the United States as well as in Italy, Germany, and Japan. Here I am using the reprint in P.O. Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought: The Classic, Scholastic, and Humanist Strains* (New York, 1961), pp. 92–119.

imitate classical models and who thus were driven to study the classics and to found classical philology.¹³

As to the philosophical implications of humanism, “the Italian humanists on the whole were neither good nor bad philosophers, but no philosophers at all.”¹⁴ Rather they were grammarians and rhetoricians who served as secretaries of princes and city governments or worked as teachers of grammar and rhetoric. As such they were heirs to the medieval *dictatores*. However, they differed from their medieval counterparts in that they injected their works with a classicist style and pursued a classical ideal of culture. The humanists concerned themselves with the *studia humanitatis*, “humane studies or the studies befitting a human being,” which, as one learns from humanistic literature, comprised “grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history, and moral philosophy.”¹⁵ Kristeller makes no specific reference to Petrarch’s role in the evolution of Italian humanism in this piece. Nonetheless, by noting that Italian humanism originated in the late thirteenth century, he indicates obliquely that Petrarch was not its founder.¹⁶

Petrarch does become a central figure in Ronald Witt’s account of the origin of Italian humanism. Indeed, Witt makes the most forceful and elaborate case against the chronological priority of Petrarch in the field of classical revival. In an important article, “The Origins of Humanism as a Stylistic Ideal” (1988), and more recently in a major book, *In the Footsteps of the Ancients: The Origins of Humanism from Lovato to Bruni* (2000), he argues that humanism was essentially a stylistic and philological enterprise and that Petrarch represents a third-generation humanist in what he believes was a multi-generation movement. Witt notes:

¹³ Ibid., pp. 98–99.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 100.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 110 and n. 58.

¹⁶ In subsequent studies on Petrarch, Kristeller was much more explicit about the prevalence of a pre-Petrarchan humanism. In fact, in a study on Petrarch and on humanism and scholasticism, in which he reiterates much of the argument on the rhetorical nature of humanism we have noted above, he argues: “Per quanto il Petrarca... non sia molto disposto a elogiare i suoi predecessori, è più che ovvio che egli ebbe i suoi precursori più importanti tra quegli studiosi e letterati padovani dell’ultimo Duecento e del primo Trecento che rappresentano la fioritura più alta di quella cultura che siamo abituati a chiamare preumanistica, ma che guardata bene è nient’altro che la stessa cultura umanistica nella sua fase primitiva, cioè pre-petrarchesca.” P.O. Kristeller, “Il Petrarca, l’umanesimo e la scolastica,” *Lettere italiane* 7 (1955), 368. See also idem, “Umanesimo e scolastica a Padova fino al Petrarca,” *Medioevo* 11 (1985), 1–18, but especially 3–6.

Setting Petrarch's Christianized version of humanism and his syncretic stylistic theory at the origins of the movement has distorted our perspective of its evolution between the generations of Mussato and Bruni. Petrarch was the first to formulate a program and a goal for humanists, but he was preceded by two generations of scholars and literary men with interests in and attitudes toward the ancients much like his own.

He thus concurs with Weiss that Italian humanism originated several decades before Petrarch and that the illustrious poet built on the accomplishments of his predecessors: "Petrarch joined a scholarly and literary movement that was already more than seventy years old, and his own contributions built on an inheritance."¹⁷ Petrarch's predecessors included Lovato dei Lovati, the progenitor of the humanist movement, and Albertino Mussato, the dean of the second generation of humanists and the single most important literary figure prior to Petrarch. Witt speculates that the acknowledgment of Petrarch's primacy in the area of classical renewal by subsequent Renaissance humanists may have been due to his self-promotion. Be that as it may, Petrarch was quite successful in the rediscovery and appropriation of classical stylistic norms. In fact, "he contributed enormously to the process of classicizing. If most of what he wrote did not reach a level of heuristic or generic imitation, some of his poetry and historical writings had the potential for being models of classicizing for his followers."¹⁸

Turning now to the humanists' assessment of Petrarch's *renovatio*, we note that the first Renaissance scholar to address this facet of Petrarch's thought was Giovanni Boccaccio. In a letter to Jacopo Pizzinga (1372), a high functionary in the Sicilian court who aspired to become a Latin poet, Boccaccio encourages the amateur poet to persist in his endeavor, not only because poetry writing was a noble enterprise that celebrated and immortalized the deeds of outstanding men, but also because the road to Latin poetry had been prepared, opened and paved (*paratum, adapertum stratumque*) by Petrarch.¹⁹ Indeed, having chosen to pursue Latin poetry, Petrarch went on to cleanse it of the numerous impurities with which it had been polluted throughout the centuries and to restore it to its pristine form. In so doing he opened the way (*viam aperuit*) to Latin poetry for himself and for those who wished to follow him.²⁰

¹⁷ Witt, *In the Footsteps of the Ancients*, p. 81 and pp. 18–19 for the reference to Weiss.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 275.

¹⁹ "Insiste ceptis virili animo: paratum adapertum stratumque iter habes." Giovanni Boccaccio, *Opere latine minori*, ed. Aldo Francesco Massera (Bari, 1928), p. 196.

²⁰ "Franciscus Petrarca...neglectis quorundam principii...vix poeticum limen attin-

Petrarch's accomplishments in the area of Latin poetry were so numerous and significant that they led to his being crowned poet laureate on the Capitol in Rome. Such was the impact of Petrarch's coronation, the like of which had not been seen in Rome for over a thousand years, that the Senate, the Roman people and the Capitol itself took note.²¹ Boccaccio, then, sees Petrarch as playing a fundamental role in the restoration of ancient Roman poetry.

Petrarch's Latin literature on classical Rome became the object of much speculation for Coluccio Salutati, the single most important defender and propagator of Petrarchan thought in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. However, Salutati saw this literature in strictly rhetorical and stylistic terms. For example, speaking of the *De viris illustribus*, he notes that this work deserved to be admired for its stylistic refinement and rhetorical sophistication,²² but he makes no reference to the strong exemplary intent of the *De viris*, a characteristic that was to be appreciated and emulated by the humanists of the fifteenth century.²³ Indeed, Salutati's strong Christian orientation prevented him from considering the ideological renewal characteristic of Petrarch's literature on classical Rome. For the distinguished Tuscan, Petrarch's revival was limited to the stylistic and rhetorical sphere. As such it had been preceded by a *renovatio litterarum* carried out by the likes of Mussato and Geri d'Arezzo, who had distinguished themselves in the field of style and eloquence (*qui stilo et eloquentia claruerunt*).²⁴ Petrarch's interest in ancient culture

gentibus, vetus iter arripere orsus est... ut nulla illum sistere impedimenta quirent... quin imo, amotis vepribus arbustisque quibus mortalium negligentia obsitum comperit restauratisque aggere firmo proluvis semesis rupibus, sibi et post eum ascendere volentibus viam aperuit." *Ibid.*, p. 195.

²¹ "...in extremos usque vertices Parnasi conscendit, et ex Danis frondibus sermo composito et suis temporibus addito, ab annis forsitan mille vel amplius invisum ostendit quiribus applaudente senatu, et rugientes rubigine cardines veteris Capitolii in adversam partem ire coegit et maxima romanorum letitia annales eorum insolito signavit triumpho." *Ibid.*, pp. 195–96.

²² "lege librum eius [Petrarch's] *De viris illustribus*," Salutati reminds Poggio, "et dic, si potes, quid sibi deficiat maiestatis, pulcritudinis vel ornatus. In dicendo quidem nonne servata est personarum dignitas, magnitudo rerum, verborum proprietas, negociorum elegantia, stili soliditas, sobrietas atque decus?" Coluccio Salutati, *Epistolario di Coluccio Salutati*, ed. Francesco Novati, 4 vols. (Rome, 1891–1911), 4:140.

²³ On this see below, pp. 233–34 and n. 61.

²⁴ In a letter to Francesco Zabarella, Salutati writes: "Duos doctores memini, vir insignis... qui stilo et eloquentia hoc quartodecimo seculo claruerunt; unus, scilicet, compatriota tuus Albertinus Mussatus, cuius admiramus hystorias et habemus poemata; alter fuit Gerius aretinus, cuius versus et epistolas satirasque prosaicas non mediocriter commendamus." Salutati, *Epistolario*, ed. F. Novati, 3:408–10. On this matter cf. Weiss, *The*

and his contribution to classical rebirth are addressed also by Pier Paolo Vergerio, an important follower of Petrarch and the scholar who provided the first edition of the *Africa* (ca. 1396). In the *Petrarcae vita* written in 1397, Vergerio notes that the illustrious humanist was a highly learned man involved in many fields of study. Among his numerous interests he showed a predilection for the knowledge of ancient culture.²⁵ A distinguishing feature of Petrarch's scholarship, according to Vergerio, was his eloquence, which was of the highest quality, as attested to by the style of his works. Indeed, he alone (*unicus fuit*) had brought back to life the art of ancient rhetoric, which had been overlooked for many centuries and which, therefore, had almost become unknown.²⁶ To the extent that Vergerio saw Petrarch involved in classical culture as a whole, his view of the distinguished humanist's *renovatio* is more inclusive than that of Boccaccio, which is limited to the restoration of ancient poetry, or that of Salutati, which considers solely the revival of ancient style and rhetoric. Nevertheless, Vergerio's assessment of Petrarch's classical rebirth lacks the all-encompassing interpretation it was to acquire in later humanists. For a more comprehensive and sharper rendition of Petrarch's notion of *renovatio* we must go to Leonardo Bruni.

In *Dialogus II* of the *Dialogi ad Petrum Paulum Histrum*, which was written at the beginning of the fifteenth century,²⁷ Bruni notes that Petrarch deserved to be praised for several reasons, but "especially because he was the very scholar who restored to life (*reparavit*) the *Studia humanitatis* which had been extinct, and opened for us the

Dawn of Humanism in Italy, p. 4. For a discerning analysis of the complex and, at times, tortuous reasoning of Salutati see Ronald G. Witt, *Hercules at the Crossroads: The Life, Works, and Thought of Coluccio Salutati* (Durham, NC, 1983), but cf. Angelo Mazzocco, "Classicism and Christianity in Salutati: Considerations in Light of Ronald G. Witt's *Hercules at the Crossroads. The Life, Works, and Thought of Coluccio Salutati*," *Italica* 65 (1988), 251–63.

²⁵ "Incubuit unice inter multa ad notitiam vetustatis..." Pier Paolo Vergerio, *Petrarcae vita* in *Le vite di Dante, Petrarca e Boccaccio scritte fino al secolo decimosesto*, ed. Angelo Solerti (Milano, 1904), p. 299.

²⁶ "Eloquio fuit claro, ac potenti, ut stilus librorum indicat, atque (ut vere dixerim) unicus fuit, qui per tot saecula exulantem, et iam pene incognitam dicendi facultatem in nostra tempora revocaret." *Ibid.*

²⁷ The date of composition of *Dialogus II* and its relationship to *Dialogus I* have been the object of much controversy among Bruni's scholars. See David Quint, "Humanism and Modernity: A Reconsideration of Bruni's *Dialogues*," *Renaissance Quarterly* 38 (1985), 427–31. Nevertheless, the consensus is that *Dialogus II* was written very early in the fifteenth century.

path (*cum...viam aperuerit*) to show in what manner we could acquire learning (*quemadmodum discere possemus*).²⁸ In this passage of *Dialogus II*, Petrarch emerges as the founder of a new field of studies, the *studia humanitatis*, which, as Quattrocento humanists, including Bruni, never tired of asserting, were highly ennobling in that they were the source of all virtues.²⁹ By instituting the *studia humanitatis*, Petrarch had opened the path (*viam aperuerit*) to learning (*discere*); and learning, as understood by Quattrocento humanists, meant the philological restoration of ancient texts and the assimilation of their stylistic tenets as well as the emulation of the ideas and values that these texts contained. In a subsequent work, *La vita di Petrarca*, published in 1436, which elaborates in some important ways on the statement of *Dialogus II* noted above, Bruni maintains that Petrarch was the first (*fu il primo*) who called back to light (*rivocò in luce*) the elegance of the lost and extinguished style of the ancients (*l'antica leggiadria dello stile perduto e spento*), and that even though the ancient style did not achieve perfection in Petrarch's own writings, nevertheless, he opened the path (*aperse la via*) to this perfection. Indeed, by rediscovering Cicero's works and by assimilating as much as possible the Ciceronian eloquence, he went a long way in showing those who were to follow him how to achieve perfection in the classical style.³⁰ In *La vita di Petrarca*, Bruni repeats two key statements that he had used in *Dialogus II*: *rivocò in luce* and *aperse la via*, but he adds an important new one: *fu il primo*. This last statement attests unequivocally to the primacy of Petrarch in the area of classical renewal. Moreover, in *La vita di Petrarca*, Bruni puts Petrarch's accomplishment in an historical context. By indicating that Petrarch had shown his followers how

²⁸ "Nec audebimus illum suis meritis ornare, presertim cum hic vir studia humanitatis que iam extincta erant, repararit et nobis, quemadmodum discere possemus, viam aperuerit?" *Dialogi ad Petrum Paulum Histrum* in *Opere letterarie e politiche di Leonardo Bruni*, ed. and trans. Paolo Viti (Turin, 1996), p. 138. I have followed Hans Baron's translation (with some variants of my own) in his *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny* (rev. ed. Princeton, 1966), p. 260. Unless otherwise indicated, subsequent translations are my own.

²⁹ See, among others, Bruni's *Oratio in funere Johannis Strozze* in *Opere letterarie e politiche*, ed. and trans. Viti, p. 723 and Giannozzo Manetti, *Biographical Writings*, eds. and trans. Stefano U. Baldassarri and Rolf Bagemihl, (The I Tatti Renaissance Library) 9 (Cambridge, MA, 2003), p. 121.

³⁰ "Francesco Petrarca fu il primo il quale ebbe tanta grazia d'ingegno, che riconobbe e rivocò in luce l'antica leggiadria dello stile perduto e spento, e posto che in lui perfetto non fusse, pur da sè vide ed aperse la via a questa perfezione, ritrovando l'opere di Tullio e quelle gustando ed intendendo, adattandosi quanto potè e seppe a quella elegantissima e perfettissima facondia: e per certo fece assai, solo a dimostrare la via a quelli che dopo lui avevano a seguire." Leonardo Bruni, *Vita di Petrarca* in *Le vite*, ed. Solerti, p. 290.

to achieve perfection in the classical style, Bruni acknowledges obliquely that perfection in this scholarly area had in fact been achieved in his own time and that when compared with the classical style of his contemporaries that of Petrarch was not perfect (*perfetto non fusse*).³¹ However, such deficiency did not lessen Petrarch's pivotal role in the revival of classical style, for he had been the first to call this style back to light and to show how it could be perfected.

Bruni's perception of Petrarch's *renovatio* is shared by Poggio and echoed by Sicco Polenton in his *Scriptorum illustrium Latinae linguae libri* (ca. 1426). It seems that in his younger years Poggio was somewhat scornful of Petrarch's contribution to the renewal of ancient culture.³² However, later in life he demonstrated a genuine respect and admiration for Petrarch, whom he now considered the initiator of classical revival. Indeed, in a revealing statement of the *De infelicitate principum*, which was written in 1440, Poggio offers an appraisal of the illustrious humanist and of his role in the area of classical rebirth that parallels Bruni's. Petrarch, Poggio argues, was the equal of the ancients in both wisdom and eloquence. Because of him, the *studia humanitatis*, which had been dormant for so many years, had enjoyed such a revival that they had almost regained their ancient dignity and vitality.³³ It has been suggested that Sicco Polenton credited Albertino Mussato, a fellow Paduan, with primacy in the area of classical rebirth.³⁴ It is true that Polenton saw Mussato as a skillful and distinguished poet, who had written a tragedy that adhered to classical stylistic norms and who had

³¹ No doubt Bruni included himself among the contemporary scholars who had achieved perfection in the classical style. Indeed, Quattrocento humanists were unanimous in considering Bruni a skillful rhetorician who exhibited a highly refined style. See, for example, Paolo Cortesi, *De hominibus doctis dialogus*, ed. Giacomo Ferrau (Palermo, 1979), pp. 117–18. This being the case, Bruni may have used his own rhetorical skills as a bench-mark with which to assess Petrarch's Latin style.

³² Such is the impression one gains from Salutati. See Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance*, pp. 254–56 and 264–67 and Iiro Kajanto, *Poggio Bracciolini and Classicism: A Study in Early Italian Humanism* (Helsinki, 1987), pp. 5–15.

³³ “Franciscus Petrarcha, vir priscis illis sapientia atque eloquentia comparandus, cuius ingenio haec nostra humanitatis studia, quae multis annis sopita iacuerunt, adeo excitata sunt, ut priorem ferme dignitatem ac vires recuperarent.” Poggio Bracciolini, *De infelicitate principum*, in *Opera omnia*, ed. Riccardo Fubini, 4 vols. (Turin, 1964–1969), 1: 409.

³⁴ Weiss, *The Dawn of Humanism in Italy*, p. 4 and Paolo Viti, “Umansimo letterario e primario regionale nell'Italia illustrata di F. Biondo,” in *Studi filologici, letterari e storici in memoria di Guido Favati*, eds. Giorgio Varanini and Palmiro Pinagli (Padua, 1977), pp. 720–21.

been crowned poet laureate.³⁵ Nonetheless, in Polenton's appraisal, Mussato does not emerge as a bona fide restorer of classical civilization; his classicism is conveyed as lacking innovation and as being limited essentially to poetry. Polenton finds the real restorer of classical culture in Petrarch, a truly outstanding man of letters, according to him, the like of whom had not been seen for almost a thousand years. Polenton argues, in a Bruni-like manner, that there could be no doubt that Petrarch was the single most important restorer of classical learning, which had been neglected and dormant for a long time and which had at last being made available to modern scholars.³⁶ Of course, Bruni's appraisal of Petrarch's *renovatio* finds its corroboration in his fellow Florentine, Giannozzo Manetti.³⁷

Arguably the most sagacious and accurate appraisal of Petrarch's *renovatio* is found in a key segment of Biondo Flavio's *Italia illustrata*, which was published in 1453.³⁸ Biondo notes that those familiar with ancient

³⁵ "Ipsum quoque honoratum faciebat vulgata fama quod grammaticus doctus esset et metri faciendi cum arte tum exercitatione gratiam quandam et facilitatem haberet. Vulgo quidem appellabatur poeta... Horum autem favore ac consensu omnium peritorum grandique apparatu et pompa Musatus qua solebant antiqui poetae laurea coronatus... Nomini vero eius inscripta Ecerrinis tragoedia, non ignobile opus, extat." Sicco Polenton, *Scriptorum illustrium Latinae linguae in Sicconis Polentoni scriptorum illustrium Latinae linguae, libri XVIII*, ed. Berthold L. Ullman (Rome, 1928), pp. 127–28.

³⁶ "Quippe dicendi genus intentatum reliquit nullum atque istis in studiis ea gravitate, copia, gratia versatus est ut qui etiam severissime iudicant fateantur ipsum excelluisse cunctos qui aut memoria sua viverent aut superiori aetate mille prope ad anos istis in litteris claruissent. Neque vero id negant qui fateri quae sunt vera non verentur, ipsum esse illum qui et princeps et auctor fuit excitandi studii et poetici et omnis eloquentiae, ut quae per diu neglecta fuerant et quasi sopita dormierant, ea tandem mortalium ad cognitionem usumque redirent." *Ibid.*, 139.

³⁷ In his *De illustribus longaevis* written in 1439, Manetti argues on the strength of Bruni that Petrarch was well versed in the *studia humanitatis* and that he was the first to bring back to light the gracefulness of Latin eloquence, which had been defunct for over a thousand years: "Circa primos adulescentiae suae annos humanitatis studiis omnino se dedicavit, in quibus usque adeo profecit ut inter ceteros laborum suorum fructus primus dicendi elegantiam, iam supra mille annos paene defunctam, praecipua quadam ingenii excellentia in lucem revocaverit." Manetti, *De illustribus longaevis* in his *Biographical Writings*. eds. and trans. Baldassarri and Bagemihl, p. 108.

³⁸ Biondo Flavio, *Italia illustrata* in idem, *De Roma triumphante libri decem, Romae instauratae libri tres, Italia illustrata* (Basel, 1559), pp. 346E–347B. Augusto Campana, the distinguished student of Biondo and of Italian humanism in general, has characterized this segment of the *Italia illustrata* as "una vera storia dell'Umanesimo dal Petrarca fino al suo tempo [Biondo's]." This observation is found in *Appunti su Biondo come storico della cultura*, p. iii, an unpublished manuscript which Professor Campana used for his course on humanism at the University of Rome (academic year 1971–1972) and which was kindly given to me by the author several years ago.

The historical account of Italian humanism expounded in this segment of the *Italia illustrata* is prompted by a reference to Giovanni da Ravenna (Biondo amalgamates Giovanni Conversino with Giovanni Malpaghini both of whom were known as Giovanni da Ravenna), whom Biondo credits for having first reintroduced the study of eloquence into

literature would have to admit that the last ancient writers who expressed themselves with a degree of classical elegance were the Church Fathers, Ambrose, Augustine, and Jerome, all of whom lived during the decline of the Roman Empire. After them there were no writers of distinction, except perhaps for St. Gregory and the Venerable Bede, who lived shortly afterward, and St. Bernard who lived many years later. However, for a writer in the classical mold, one had to go to Petrarch. An extremely talented and diligent scholar, Petrarch was truly the first (*primus vero omnium*) to begin to revive ancient poetry and eloquence. To be sure in Petrarch ancient eloquence did not achieve the perfection it eventually achieved in many of his contemporaries. Such deficiency, however, was not due to lack of talent on the part of Petrarch, but to the lack of valuable books on the subject matter.³⁹ Indeed, the study of eloquence in particular, and of *bonae litterae* (= *studia humanitatis*) in general, had made tremendous strides since Petrarch. Such success was due to the rediscovery, restoration, and interpretation of numerous classical texts. The many distinguished intellectuals, scholars such as Pier Paolo Vergerio, Leonardo Bruni, Poggio Bracciolini, Guarino da Verona, Vittorino da Feltre, Gasparino da Barzizza, Francesco Filelfo, and Lorenzo Valla, who had continued and enhanced the *renovatio* initiated by Petrarch, had at their disposal a wealth of information on classical culture of which Petrarch could only dream. The availability of many new and valuable works made it possible for these scholars to surpass Petrarch's rhetorical skills and to spread throughout Italy knowledge of *bonae litterae*.⁴⁰

Italy: "fuisse primum [Giovanni da Ravenna] a quo eloquentiae studia... in Italiam fuerint reducta." Biondo, *Italia illustrata*, p. 346E. Given that this observation and the succinct dissertation on the evolution of Italian humanism that follows it occur in the description of the section on Romagna, Biondo's native region, it has been argued that here Biondo attributes primacy in the rediscovery of classical eloquence to Giovanni da Ravenna and that in so doing he is being motivated by the honor that such an attribution would bring to Romagna. Viti, "Umanesimo letterario e primario regionale nell'*Italia illustrata di Biondo*," pp. 711–32. However, a close reading of this segment of the *Italia illustrata* reveals that what concerns Biondo here is not so much Romagna, but Italy; consequently Petrarch, a scholar with Pan-Italian interests, rather than Giovanni da Ravenna, emerges as the first and true restorer of ancient culture. For a fuller discussion of this matter see Angelo Mazzocco, "*L'Italia illustrata di Biondo e la sua ricezione in Europa*," in *La geografia storica tra Umanesimo e Rinascimento*, eds. Paolo Pontari et al. (forthcoming).

³⁹ "Primus vero omnium Franciscus Petrarca magno vir ingenio maioreque diligentia et poesim et eloquentiam excitare coepit, nec tamen is attigit Ciceronianae eloquentiae florem, quo multos in hoc saeculo videmus ornatos, in quo quidem nos librorum magis quam ingenii carentiam defectumque culpamus." Biondo, *Italia illustrata*, p. 346E.

⁴⁰ "Quo ex tot librorum ipsius eloquentiae fomitum allato nostris hominibus

The study of eloquence and of *bonae litterae* was also aided considerably by the introduction into Italy of Greek letters.⁴¹ The availability of Greek letters broadened the Italians' vista of ancient culture and enhanced significantly their rhetorical skills. According to Biondo, Greek learning in the Italian peninsula came into being with the arrival in Italy of Manuel Chrysoloras. A highly learned and virtuous individual, Chrysoloras taught Greek literature in Venice, Florence, and Rome. Such was his impact on the Italian intellectual community that only a few years after his arrival in Italy those who were not knowledgeable of Greek culture were considered unlearned in Latin letters.⁴²

Like Bruni, Biondo recognizes the primacy of Petrarch in the area of classical renewal and like his Florentine counterpart he puts this primacy in an historical context. However, Biondo's historical contextualization is broader and more detailed than Bruni's. Biondo considers Petrarch's primacy in the context of the long and tortuous history of classical scholarship from the decline of the Roman Empire to his own day and in the backdrop of the numerous philological innovations and of the assimilation of Greek letters carried out in Quattrocento Italy. An important feature of this segment of the *Italia illustrata* is Biondo's consideration of Chrysoloras' role in the area of *renovatio*. Chrysoloras, according to Biondo, played a pivotal role in the revival of classical culture. Indeed, not to partake of the Greek learning brought about by Chrysoloras meant to be significantly wanting in the field of Latin letters. Nevertheless, the distinguished Greek scholar did not supplant Petrarch as the initiator of classical rebirth. Rather he energized, reinforced, and enriched the revival undertaken by Petrarch.

In his *De hominibus doctis dialogus*, written ca. 1490,⁴³ Paolo Cortesi furnishes an assessment of Petrarch's *renovatio* and of Chrysoloras' role in the area of classical revival that is similar in some significant ways to that

adiumento factum videmus, ut maior meliorque ea quam Petrarcha habuit dicendi copia in nostram pervenerit aetatem... Italia bonis litteris implenda pro viribus enituntur." Ibid., p. 347A-B.

⁴¹ "Nec parvum fuit cum adiumentum ad discendum eloquentiam, tum etiam incitamentum Graecarum accessio litterarum." Ibid., p. 347A.

⁴² "...effecitque eius [Chrysoloras'] doctrina paucis tamen continuata annis, ut qui Graecas nescirent litteras, Latinis viderentur indoctiores." Ibid., p. 346G.

⁴³ On the dating of the writing of this work and other pertinent information on the life of Paolo Cortesi, see John Monfasani, "The Puzzling Dates of Paolo Cortesi," in *Humanistica per Cesare Vasoli*, eds. Fabrizio Meroi and Elisabetta Scapparone (Florence, 2003), pp. 87-97.

of Biondo. While addressing the issue of ancient eloquence, Antonius, the main speaker of the *Dialogus*, notes that after many years of neglect this discipline had finally been reintroduced into Italy by Chrysoloras, under whose tutelage, having come to know Greek letters, Italian scholars for the first time dedicated themselves passionately to the study of eloquence.⁴⁴ But having been told by the interlocutor Alexander that, in considering the reintroduction of eloquence into Italy, he should have given precedence to Dante and Petrarch who had flourished before Chrysoloras, Antonius retorts that his having privileged the Greek scholar was due to the fact that the art of rhetoric had made very little progress at the time of these two Italian luminaries; both of whom were significantly wanting in the area of the Latin language. Indeed, the Latin of Petrarch was rather coarse, lacking the elegance and sophistication of the ancient writers. Nevertheless, being endowed with a remarkable talent and memory, Petrarch was the one who first (*primus*) dared to bring back to light (*lucem revocare*) the study of eloquence. Because of his extraordinary talent, for the first time (*primum*) Italy was stimulated to pursue knowledge of the [artium] *studia*.⁴⁵ That Petrarch's Latin lacked the refinements of its classical counterpart, Cortesi concludes, is logical enough, given that he lived in an exceptionally uncultivated era (*in faece omnium saeculorum nato*).⁴⁶ As in Biondo, then, so too in Cortesi, Chrysoloras played a pivotal role in the revival of classical learning. Nonetheless, as in Biondo so too in Cortesi, the initiator of such a revival was Petrarch, for, notwithstanding his stylistic deficiencies, deficiencies which were due to the barbaric age in which he lived, Petrarch was the one to awaken in the Italians a fervor for classical eloquence and learning.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ "Nam posteaquam maximarum artium studia tam diu in sordibus aegra desertaque iacuerunt, satis constat Grisoloram Bisantium transmarinam illam disciplinam in Italiam advexisse; quo doctore adhibito primum nostri homines... cognitis Graecis litteris, vehementer sese ad eloquentiae studia excitaverunt." Cortesi, *De hominibus doctis dialogus*, ed. Ferrau, p. 111.

⁴⁵ "Fuit in illo [Petrarch] ingenii atque memoriae tanta magnitudo, ut primus ausus sit eloquentiae studia in lucem revocare: nam huius ingenii affluentia primum Italia exhilarata, et tanquam ad studia impulsa atque incensa est." *Ibid.*, p. 114.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Broadly speaking the Italian humanists' view of Chrysoloras' role in the enterprise of classical rebirth conforms to that of Biondo and Cortesi. For example, in a letter to Guarino, Poggio notes that the Greek learning brought about by Chrysoloras had enhanced considerably the study of Latin letters, which were imperfect and weak prior to his arrival in Italy, and had stimulated many to pursue eloquence, which was almost restored to its ancient splendor: "Utilitas preterea quam latinis litteris attulit, que ante suum adventum mute, mance, debiles videbantur. Excitata sunt eius opere ingenia ad graecarum

One of the most forceful and sweeping appraisals of Petrarch's *renovatio* was provided by a non-Italian, the Dutch Rudolph Agricola, the progenitor of Northern humanism. In his *Life of Petrarch* (*Vita Petrarcae*), published in 1477, Agricola claims that modern scholars were indebted to the illustrious poet for the classical learning of their time. He had single-handedly (*qui solus*) brought back to life *bonae litterae* which were essentially defunct. Indeed, all ages were indebted to him—antiquity because he had rescued its glorious culture from oblivion and modern times because he had revived through much ingenuity the rich and valuable heritage of the ancients, whose benefits would endure in the future.⁴⁸

To return to the question raised at the beginning of this essay: Was Petrarch the founder of Renaissance humanism? For the modern scholars we have examined above, he was a fundamental contributor to this historical movement, but he was not its founder “for the simple reason that it [humanism] already existed” before him.⁴⁹ For the humanists, on the other hand, he was unquestionably the father of Renaissance humanism in that he was the sole initiator of classical rebirth. The modern scholars’ assessment of Petrarch’s *renovatio*/humanism, then, differs significantly from that of the humanists. How do we explain such a discrepancy? After all, the modern scholars considered here are not only distinguished

litterarum studia, que magnum doctrine lumen nostro seculo attulerunt. Tum ad eloquentiam commoti sunt permulti, in qua pristinum fere dicendi ornatum recuperatum videmus.” Poggio Bracciolini, *Lettere. Epistolarum familiarum libri*, ed. Helene Harth, 3 vols. (Florence, 1984–87), 3:348.

⁴⁸ “Hanc gloriam vel in primis vir ille, cui se omnis nostri seculi eruditio debet, Franciscus Petrarca meruisse mihi videtur, alter quidam parens atque restitutor bonarum artium, qui solus vel maxime extinctas ac prope sepultas literas ab inferis revocans veluti nouo infusas spiritu rursus animavit . . . simul de omnibus seculis optime meritus, de priscis quidem quorum vetustam rerum scriptorumque gloriam emori passus non est (spem studiaque ad emulandos priores imitandosque excitavit), de suis vero quod tanta ingenii sui laude ipsa decoravit. Nos autem, id est posteritatem ipsam, nequaquam tanto beneficio suo soluendo esse constat.” *Vita Petrarcae illustrata per eruditissimum virum Rudolphum Agricolum Phrisium ad Antonium Scrofinium Papiensem. Anno salutis 1477 Papiæ*, ed. Ludwig Bertalot, *La Bibliofila* 30 (1928), 383–84. For Agricola’s life of Petrarch, see Theodor Mommsen, “Rudolph Agricola’s Life of Petrarch,” *Traditio* 8 (1952), 367–86; repr. in his *Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, ed. Eugene F. Rice, Jr., (Ithaca, NY, 1959), pp. 236–261. Agricola’s view of Petrarch resonates in Edward Gibbon: “His [Petrarch’s] Latin works of philosophy, poetry, and eloquence established his serious reputation . . .; and, if the ponderous volume of his writings be now abandoned to a long repose, our gratitude must applaud the man who by precept and example revived the spirit and the study of the Augustan age.” *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. J.B. Bury, 7 (London, 1909), p. 265.

⁴⁹ See Weiss above, p. 217.

students of Renaissance humanism, but the very individuals who have contributed significantly to the definition of this important historical epoch in the last several decades. The explanation, it seems to me, lies in the perception that these two groups of intellectuals have of *renovatio*/humanism in general and of Petrarch's contribution to this intellectual enterprise in particular. For the modern scholars noted above, classical rebirth is essentially a rhetorical and philological undertaking. For example, while explaining the scope of his work, '*In the Footsteps of the Ancients*,' Witt argues: "My decision to center my discussion of humanism on stylistic change derives not from an antiquarian loyalty to the earliest approaches, but rather from my conviction that a litmus for identifying a humanist was his intention to imitate ancient Latin style."⁵⁰ This being the case, in justifying the humanism of the literati prior to Petrarch, these scholars emphasize activities and interests, such as Lovato's study of the metric structure of Seneca's *Tragedies*, Mussato's assimilation of Livy's stylistic criteria, or Benzo d'Alessandria's search for and emendation of ancient texts, which fall within the realm of rhetoric and philology. And even the appraisal of the humanism of Petrarch is based primarily on rhetorical and philological criteria. Petrarch was a distinguished humanist because of his relentless search for and restoration of ancient texts (Livy's *Ab urbe condita*, for example), because of his skillful assimilation of ancient poetic norms, especially Virgil's, and because of his propensity to subject his sources to textual and historical criticism. If seen in this light, one can in fact argue that Petrarch is not the founder of humanism, as Weiss and the Billanoviches claim, or that he is a third-generation humanist, as Witt maintains. However, for Petrarch *renovatio* meant not only rhetoric and philology but also ideology. To be sure, one needed to internalize the stylistic and rhetorical tenets of the ancients, as he indicates in *Familiare* XXII.2, but one also needed to assimilate their values and ideas. Indeed, a close reading of Petrarch's literature on classical Rome reveals rather clearly that to accomplish the former without the latter meant failing to take full advantage of the rich and valuable culture of antiquity.

In the invective *Contra eum qui maledixit Italie* (1373), while replying to the French scholar Jean d'Hesdin, who had vilified contemporary Rome and its inhabitants,⁵¹ Petrarch argues that, though severely diminished

⁵⁰ Witt, '*In the Footsteps of the Ancients*,' p. 22.

⁵¹ According to d'Hesdin the degeneration of ancient Rome had been so complete that

(*quaquam graviter imminuta*), Rome was still more than a mere name, its glory being destined to last for ever.⁵² The immortality of Rome was due to its having excelled in all areas of human activity from rhetoric to grammar, from history to philosophy, from jurisprudence to poetry, and from military science to public administration. Indeed, such was the supremacy of Rome in the annals of human history that world history was nothing else but the praise of Rome: "What else in fact is all history, if not the exaltation of Rome?"⁵³

Given the numerous and extraordinary accomplishments of the ancient Romans, it behooved contemporary Italians, whom Petrarch considered the sole inheritors of classical Rome,⁵⁴ to imitate and assimilate ancient Roman civilization in all its forms and expressions, be it the elegance of its style, the efficiency of its public administration, or the effectiveness of its armies. He thus advocates adherence to classical stylistic norms (*Familiares* XXIII.19) and he prods Cola di Rienzo to be a modern Brutus (*Epistolae variae* 48) and Emperor Charles IV a new Caesar Augustus.⁵⁵ Indeed, while giving Charles some ancient coins which bore effigies of classical emperors, Petrarch tells the monarch that he should imitate the ancient emperors by making their distinguished deeds part of a program of political action:

contemporary Rome was only a pale image of its classical counterpart. Indeed, the contemporary Romans had inherited only the vices of their ancient ancestors; consequently, it was presumptuous to assume that they were endowed with ancient Roman virtues: "Nec tamen ego nego, in ipsa urbe Roma multos valentes viros exstitisse, quos praesentes Romani non sequentes a praedecessorum suorum valida probitate degenerant... Istis enim Romani vitiis maculati, de praenominatorum valentium solo nomine gloriantes, tamquam et ipsi tales essent, stulte et inaniter superbiunt... Bonis igitur alienis, propriis relictis virtutibus, stultum est se credere decoratum." Jean d'Hesdin, *Magistri Iohannis de Hisdinio contra Franciscum Petrarcam Epistola*, ed. Enrico Cocchia, *Atti della R. Accademia di archeologia, lettere e belle arti di Napoli*, n.s. 7 (1919), pp. 137–38.

⁵² "Roma non in totum corrui, et quanquam graviter imminuta, adhuc tamen est aliquid preter nomen. Muri quidem et palatia ceciderunt: gloria nominis immortalis est." Francesco Petrarca, *Invectiva contra eum qui maledixit Italiae (In difesa dell'Italia)*, ed. and trans. Giuliana Crevatin (Milan, 1999), p. 54. An analogous concept is found also in *Africa* II, lines 305–326.

⁵³ "Quid est enim aliud omnis historia, quam romana laus?" Petrarca, *Invectiva.*, p. 94.

⁵⁴ In the famous canzone "Italia mia," Petrarch notes that the Italian people had Latin blood coursing through their veins; consequently, they had the potential to reacquire the greatness of ancient Rome provided that there was peace and collaboration among the potentates of Italy. *Rime sparse* CXXVIII, lines 74 and 87–96.

⁵⁵ The *renovatio* of Charles IV was contingent on his reinvesting the Empire with its ancient *romanitas*. According to Petrarch the Roman Empire lost its *raison d'être* the moment it was moved from Rome to the northern countries (*Sine nomine* 4 and *Familiares* XIX.12).

Here, O Caesar...are the men whom you have succeeded, here are those whom you must try to imitate (*quos imitari studeas*) and admire, whose ways and character you should emulate: I would have given these coins to no other save yourself. Your prestige has moved me; for although I know their ways and names and deeds, it is up to you not only to know but to follow their example.⁵⁶

Petrarch concludes that for this *imitatio* to be successful, contemporary Italians needed to understand the true essence and values of ancient Roman civilization, essence and values that had been obfuscated during a long dark age which extended from the fall of the Roman Empire to his own time.⁵⁷ The realization that ancient Roman civilization was not known in his time prompts Petrarch to restore and clarify the numerous accomplishments of classical Rome.⁵⁸ In fact, the *renovatio Romae* and its corollary the *imitatio Romae* constitute the *vis vitae* of Petrarch's works on Roman archeology and institutions, the so-called *Romanae antiquitates*, works such as *Familiares* VI.2 and XXII.14 and *Seniles* XIV.1 which deal respectively with the Roman ruins, the Roman army, and Roman public administration.⁵⁹ The *renovatio* and *imitatio Romae* are also central to those works which address important historical periods and figures of antiquity, such as the *De viris illustribus* (the all-Roman

⁵⁶ "Et ecce...Cesar, quibus successisti; ecce quos imitari studeas et mirari, ad quorum formulam atque imaginem te componas, quos preter te unum nulli hominum daturus eram. Tua me movit autoritas; licet enim horum mores et nomina, horum ego res gestas norim, tuum est non modo nosse sed sequi." *Familiares* XIX.3 in F. Petrarca, *Le familiari*, ed. Vittorio Rossi, 4 vols. (Florence, 1968), 3:315. Translation by Aldo Bernardo in Francesco Petrarca. *Letters on Familiar Matters. Rerum familiarum libri XVII-XXI*, (Baltimore, 1985), p. 79.

⁵⁷ Such is the implication of *Familiares* XX.8 where he admits to Agapito Colonna the Younger that he would limit his *De viris illustribus* to the ancient luminaries since practically none of the men of the post-Roman era were worthy of being included in such a work. For a valuable study of this aspect of Petrarch's thought see Theodor E. Mommsen, "Petrarch's Conception of the 'Dark Ages,'" *Speculum* 17 (1942), 226-42, repr. in his *Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, pp. 106-30.

⁵⁸ He acknowledges this much in *Familiares* VI.2 where he alludes to his needing to restore Roman history because contemporary Rome would most certainly reacquire its ancient virtues were it to begin to know its ancient heritage: "Quis enim dubitare potest, quin illico surrectura sit, si coeperit se Roma cognoscere?" *Le familiari*, ed. V. Rossi, 1:314.

⁵⁹ On the contribution of antiquarian literature to the revival of antiquity and on the crucial role of *Romanae antiquitates* in the culture of Renaissance humanism, see Introduction above, p. 7 and Angelo Mazzocco, "Biondo Flavio and the Antiquarian Tradition," in *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Bononiensis. Proceedings of the Fourth International Congress for Neo-Latin Studies*, ed. Richard J. Schoek (Binghamton, NY, 1985), pp. 124-36. On Petrarch's treatment of Roman antiquities see idem, "The Antiquarianism of Francesco Petrarca," *The Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 7 (1977), 203-24.

project, the one that was to begin with Romulus and end with Titus) where he chronicles the deeds of the illustrious men of ancient Rome,⁶⁰ or the *Africa* where he glorifies the *virtus* of Scipio Africanus the Elder as well as his triumph over Hannibal during the Second Punic War.⁶¹ The strength of Petrarch's faith and belief in the *renovatio Romae* is attested to by the canzone "Spirto gentil" (*Rime sparse*, LIII). After calling upon an unnamed contemporary Roman leader to set Rome on the road to *renovatio* ("and call her [Rome] back to her ancient path"), he goes on to note that the possibility of a classical renewal induced the ancient walls, the tombs of antiquity, the entire ruined city as well as the souls of ancient Roman luminaries—the Scipios, Brutus, Fabritius [Lucinius]—to hope and rejoice. Indeed, Fabritius utters confidently: "my Rome shall be beautiful again" (*Rime sparse*, LIII, lines 6 and 29–42).

Of course, Petrarch's discourse on the *renovatio Romae* is punctuated with vacillations and doubts, as exemplified by the letter describing the ascent of Mount Ventoux (*Familiars* IV.1 [ca.1336]) and the *Secretum* (1342–1343). It seems that as he aged, he concentrated more and more on sacred literature.⁶² Indeed, in a letter (1360) to his Florentine friend Francesco Nelli (1360),⁶³ Petrarch notes that, whereas during his younger years he had been deeply involved in classical literature, captivated by such ancient luminaries as Cicero and Virgil, during his riper years he wished to devote himself to sacred literature making Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, Gregory, and Paul the focus of his attention, for the latter approach opened the way to eternal salvation. To be sure he would not overlook the distinguished literary figures of antiquity, but their role would be relegated to the stylistic sphere. In fact, whereas the Christian writers would be favored for their substance, the classical ones would be preferred for their style.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ For a concise and clear account of the various phases of composition of the *De viris illustribus* and of its content see the *Nota critica* on the *De viris* in Francesco Petrarca, *Prose*, eds. Guido Martellotti et al. (Milan, 1955), pp. 1163–66.

⁶¹ For an illuminating study on the exemplarity of ancient history in Petrarch, see Marcello Aurigemma, "La concezione storica del Petrarca e il primo nucleo del *De viris illustribus*," in *Miscellanea di studi in onore di Vittore Branca*, Vol. I: *Dal medioevo al Petrarca* (Florence, 1983) pp. 365–88. See also Eckardt Kessler, *Petrarca und die Geschichte* (Munich, 1978).

⁶² On this cf. Vergerio and Antonio da Tempo in *Le vite*, ed. Solerti, pp. 299 and 338.

⁶³ For the date of this letter, see Dotti, *Vita di Petrarca* (see above n. 2), p. 155.

⁶⁴ "Modo quos [the classical writers] in verborum, quos [the Christian writers] in reum consilio preferam." *Familiars* XXII.10 in *Le familiari*, ed. Rossi, 4:128. The rejection of earthly matters and the pursuit of eternal salvation alluded to in this letter find their

Petrarch's notion of *renovatio*, then, differs from that of the modern scholars examined above, but it concurs with that of the humanists. In fact, when the humanists speak of classical rebirth in the context of Petrarch's writings, they mean the more inclusive *renovatio*, the *renovatio* that comprises rhetoric and philology as well as values and ideas, that is to say, the type of *renovatio* pursued by Petrarch himself. In other words, unlike the modern scholars who see Petrarch's *renovatio* as essentially a philological and rhetorical enterprise, the humanists of the late-fourteenth and fifteenth centuries see it as involving not only philology and rhetoric, but also ideology. That they view Petrarch's *renovatio* in this light is attested to by their coupling the terms *eloquentia* and *studia humanitatis* whenever they address the issue of Petrarch's *renovatio*. Petrarch is praised for having recovered the stylistic tenets of antiquity and for having subjected his sources to critical analysis, but he is also praised for having revived classical culture as a whole. In what is representative of the humanists' view of Petrarch's *renovatio* and of his learning in general, Girolamo Squarciafico maintains (*Vita Petrarcae* [ca. 1500]) that Petrarch pursued all types of knowledge, be it moral philosophy, poetry, or history, and that he did so by reading the many historians and orators of antiquity, especially Cicero, Virgil, and Livy. Indeed, Petrarch devoted himself to the knowledge of antiquity and invested much time in the writing of histories.⁶⁵ He was equally successful in the area of eloquence: "Let the envious say what they want; his eloquence was clear and powerful as the style of his works indicates." Thus Squarciafico

corroboration in the poems of *Rime sparse* written after Laura's death. Thus in sonnet 365 Petrarch deplors his obsession with worldly matters and implores God to set him on the road to eternal salvation:

Tu che vedi i miei mali indegni et empi,
 Re del cielo, invisibile, immortale,
 soccorri a l'alma disviata e frale,
 e 'l suo defetto di tua grazia adempi.
 lines 5–8

However, notwithstanding his insistence on wanting to reject the profane and the earthly for the sacred and the eternal, Petrarch continued to dabble with his *De viris* and the *Africa* up to the end of his life.

⁶⁵ "Ad doctrinam, quamcumque voluisset, adplicuisset ingenium, sed morali philosophiae cognoscendae multum studuit, et artis poeticae facultati. Historicos, oratores legit omnes, sed Cicerone, Virgilio et Tito Livio delectatus. . . . Multum ad notitiam vetustatis incubuit, in historiis scribendis insudavit plurimum." Girolamo Squarciafico, *Vita Petrarcae in Le vite*, ed. Solerti, p. 357. On Squarciafico, see Carlo Dionisotti, "Fortuna del Petrarca nel Quattrocento," *Italia medievale e umanistica* 17 (1974), 89.

concludes that Petrarch “excelled in both learning and eloquence.”⁶⁶ For the humanists of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, then, Petrarch was a *primus*, that is to say, he merited chronological priority in the enterprise of classical rebirth, because he was the first to consider the full spectrum of classical Roman civilization.⁶⁷

That Petrarch’s *renovatio* was comprehensive and that he, therefore, merited acknowledgment as the father of classical revival is attested to further by what the humanists say or do not say about the pre-Petrarchan humanists. Except for Salutati, who, as we have seen above, saw classical rebirth as essentially a stylistic and rhetorical enterprise, the scholars of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries overlook almost entirely the pre-Petrarchan humanists. For example, they are absent from the various biographical accounts of Manetti. Most importantly they are excluded from that passage of Biondo’s *Italia illustrata*, where, as I have noted above, the distinguished historian gives a cogent account of the humanist movement in Italy. To be sure in the *Italia illustrata*, Biondo does mention two of the most important exponents of pre-Petrarchan humanism, the Paduans Lovato and Mussato, but in doing so he limits himself to a simple generic reference. While describing the distinguished sons of the city of Padua, he notes that “Padua also bore Mussato and Lovato, lawyers who were endowed with poetic skills.”⁶⁸ This brief statement does not indicate in any way that these two Paduan scholars contributed profoundly to the recovery of classical culture, as the modern scholars cited above maintain. That Biondo should have excluded the pre-Petrarchan humanists from the Italian humanist movement is logical enough, since they lacked the strong and comprehensive Latinity he considered essential for the contributors to such a movement.⁶⁹ This explains why Biondo’s appraisal of Petrarch differs

⁶⁶ “Dicant quid volunt invidi: eloquio fuit clarus et potens, ut stilus librorum indicat... summus doctrina summus et eloquio [fuit].” Squarciafico, *Vita Petrarcae*, p. 357.

⁶⁷ Petrarch’s encyclopedic knowledge and his pivotal contribution to classical rebirth are corroborated by the title page of the 1554 Basel edition of his *opera omnia*, which reads as follows: *Francisci Petrarcae Florentini, philosophi, oratoris, et poetae clarissimi, restorescentis literaturae Latinaeque linguae, aliquot seculis horrenda barbarie inquinatae ac pene sepultae, assertoris et instauratoris, opera quae extant omnia. In quibus praeter theologica, naturalis moralisque philosophiae praecepta, liberalium quoque artium encyclopediam, historiarum thesaurum et poesis divinam quandam vim.*

⁶⁸ “Mussattum et Lovattum iureconsultos poesi ornatos Patavium cives habuit.” *Italia illustrata*, p. 382G.

⁶⁹ The works of the pre-Petrarchan humanists do, in fact, lack the strong classical intent and the profound sense of renewal one finds in much of Petrarch’s literature on ancient Rome: Canzone 53, *Variae* 48, *De viris illuxtribus*, *Africa*, etc. Even Mussato’s *Ecerinis*, which

from that of Weiss and why Weiss objects to Biondo's characterization of Petrarch as the founder of Renaissance humanism.⁷⁰

For the humanists, Petrarch's chronological priority in the area of classical rebirth remained unchallenged even when compared with Chrysoloras' contribution to ancient revival. Though very important, Chrysoloras' contribution to the revival of antiquity, the humanists argue, took place after this revival had been initiated by Petrarch. Consequently the distinguished Greek scholar enhanced rather than originated the rebirth of classical antiquity.⁷¹ Indeed, the humanists were unanimous in crediting Petrarch with primacy in the renewal of ancient Roman civilization. They did so even when they disapproved of his life style or of some aspects of his scholarship. For example, Vergerio was highly critical of Petrarch's adherence to the contemplative life; nevertheless, he admits that Petrarch alone (*unicus*) among the literary figures of his time had revived the study of ancient Roman civilization.⁷² Likewise Francesco Filelfo credited Petrarch with having rediscovered classical poetry and eloquence, even as he maligned him with slanderous comments.⁷³ "One can, in fact, affirm," Filelfo argues, "that he [Petrarch] was the first to bring back to life the studies of poetry and eloquence (*tali studii*) and redirect them for the most part toward ancient elegance; thus rescuing them from all the darkness and monkish poppycock in which they had been engulfed."⁷⁴

As I have noted above, the humanists' consensus regarding Petrarch's notion of *renovatio* and their conviction, therefore, that he was the initiator of classical renewal, was due, to a large degree, to the method they

may have influenced the writing of the *Africa*, is imbued with a strong medieval spirit. On *Ecerinis* see Sapegno, *Il Trecento* (see above n. 3), p. 154.

⁷⁰ On Weiss see above pp. 216–17.

⁷¹ On this matter, see Biondo and Cortesi's view above (pp. 228–29) and cf., among others, Remigio Sabbadini, *La scuola e gli studi di Guarino veronese* (Catania, 1896), pp. 10–16, Ferràù, "Introduzione" in Pauli Cortesii, *De hominibus doctis*, pp. 23–27, and Witt, 'In the Footsteps of the Ancients,' pp. 342–43.

⁷² See above, p. 223. For Vergerio's criticism of Petrarch's adherence to the contemplative life, see John McManamon, S.J., *Pierpaolo Vergerio the Elder. The Humanist as Orator* (Tempe, AZ, 1996), pp. 51–61.

⁷³ On Filelfo's smearing of Petrarch, see Alessandro Vellutello, *Vita e costumi del poeta in Le vite*, ed. Solerti, p. 361.

⁷⁴ "...se può nel vero affermare lui essere stato il primo che tali studii...riscuscitò da morte e ridrizolli in gran parte alla eleganza antiqua, tolti da lor offuscati visi tutte le tenebre e brodaglia fratesca." Cited in Dionisotti, "Fortuna del Petrarca nel Quattrocento," p. 79.

used in assessing his rediscovery of antiquity. Except for *Salutati* and perhaps *Boccaccio*, while defining the *renovatio* of Petrarch the humanists were unfettered by his vacillations and by the contradictions that these vacillations engendered, vacillations and contradictions that have proven to be so problematic for modern scholarship. They were unfettered by these Petrarchan inconsistencies because in reconstructing the poet's contribution to classical renewal they went beyond those Petrarchan documents, such as the letter to Francesco Nelli, which negate the wide-ranging *renovatio* they associated with Petrarch and concentrated instead on those Petrarchan works that confirm it. Among the works chosen to confirm Petrarch's comprehensive *renovatio* were the numerous letters on matters of antiquarian interest (archeology, institutions, private life, etc.), the *De viris illustribus*, but above all the *Africa*.⁷⁵ The *Africa* was favored because of its strong Latinity (it imitated Virgil and celebrated the virtues of Scipio Africanus, one of the most admired heroes of antiquity) but also because it led to Petrarch's being crowned poet laureate on Rome's Capitol in 1341.⁷⁶ For the humanists this coronation constituted a momentous episode in the enterprise of classical rebirth because, as we learn from Sico Polenton and Boccaccio, among others, it represented a temporal and spatial rejoining with the classical Roman world.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ The humanists' strong interest in Petrarch's Latin works on classical Roman civilization is affirmed by none other than Jacob Burckhardt: "Petrarch who lives in the memory of most people nowadays chiefly as a great Italian poet, owed his fame among his contemporaries far rather to the fact that he was a kind of living representative of antiquity, that he imitated all styles of Latin poetry, endeavored by his voluminous historical and philosophical writings not to supplant but to make known the works of the ancients, and wrote letters that, as treatises on matters of antiquarian interest, obtained a reputation, which to us is unintelligible, but which was natural enough in an age without handbooks." Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, trans. S.G.C. Middlemore, intro. by Peter Burke, notes by Peter Murray (London, 1990), p. 137.

⁷⁶ Boccaccio regarded the *Africa* divine: "...et maxime de *Affrica* illa sua, quam ego celeste arbitror opus..." (*Opere Latine minori*, ed. Massèra, p. 226), Bernardo Lapini (Illicino) considers it the most important work (*maxime l'Africa*) written at Vacluse (*Le vite*, ed. Solerti, p. 340) whereas Franco Sacchetti in a poem on the death of Boccaccio worried whether or not this pivotal Petrarchan work would be edited now that Boccaccio has died: "A cui si vederà l'*Affrica* avante,/che de l'altro poeta venia nova/verso costui, ed or rimasa è sola?" F. Sacchetti, *Il libro delle rime*, ed., Franca Brambilla Ageno (Florence, 1990), p. 259.

⁷⁷ "...poeta [Petrarch] Romam venit. Tum ipso in Capitolio, summa dudum imperii Romani arce et clarissimo loco, magna cum celebritate ac laetitia civitatis, grandique conventu nobilium et peritorum, qui undique istam ad rem visendam honorandamque venissent, ac frequentissimo populo Romano approbante..." Sico Polenton, *Petrarchae poetae clarissimi vita* in *Le vite*, ed. Solerti, p. 323. On Boccaccio, see n. 21 above.

The question now arises: Does it matter what the humanists thought of Petrarch's *renovatio*? It matters because Petrarch's notion of *renovatio* constituted the *vis vitae* of fifteenth-century humanistic thought. It has been noted that Petrarch's program of classical restoration was unattainable in that it lacked a concrete plan of action, being highly idealistic with no consideration given to the socio-political intricacies of the time.⁷⁸ It is true that Petrarch's program of classical renewal was idealistic and that it lacked a concrete plan of action (given his strong poetic instinct it could not have been otherwise);⁷⁹ nevertheless, it did contribute fundamentally to the molding of Quattrocento humanism. As has been observed by Eugenio Garin:

The first great humanists knew how much of the cultural renewal in which they were taking part started with Petrarch (*abbia preso l'avvio di lì*); how much Petrarch contributed to the image of the great intellectual and his role; and how by recalling the image of the classics he influenced the rhythm of history.⁸⁰

Given that knowledge of classical Roman civilization had expanded significantly since Petrarch, as we learn from the humanists themselves, for the scholars of the fifteenth century, Petrarch was not so much a source of information, but a cultural icon to whom they resorted for guidance and inspiration. With an occasional exception (Benedetto Accolti, for example), the humanists appropriated Petrarch's method and themes. Thus Brunetti wrote biographical accounts in the Petrarchan mold,⁸¹ and both Brunetti and Biondo relied on Petrarch's models while composing their massive historical and antiquarian works.⁸² The influence of Petrarch's notion of

⁷⁸ Nancy Lankeith, *Dante and the Legend of Rome* (London, 1952), pp. 1–32; Witt, 'In the Footsteps of the Ancients,' pp. 282–91.

⁷⁹ On how his strong poetic instinct fashioned his interpretation of classical civilization, see Mazzocco, "The Antiquarianism of Francesco Petrarca," pp. 219–20 n. 34.

⁸⁰ "...i primi grandi dell'umanesimo sanno quanto del rinnovamento culturale a cui partecipano abbia preso l'avvio di lì [from Petrarch]; quanto Petrarca abbia disegnato l'immagine del grande intellettuale e della sua funzione, e come richiamando l'immagine dei classici abbia pesato sul ritmo della storia." E. Garin, "Petrarca latino," *Quaderni petrarcheschi* (see above, n. 1), p. 4.

⁸¹ Riccardo Fubini, *L'umanesimo italiano e i suoi storici. Origini rinascimentali-critica moderna* (Milan, 2001), pp. 36–37.

⁸² Angelo Mazzocco, "Decline and Rebirth in Brunetti and Biondo," *Umanesimo a Roma nel Quattrocento*, eds. Paolo Brezzi and Maristella De Panizza Lorch (Rome, 1984), pp. 249–66. It should be noted that the humanists often elaborated on the Petrarchan model in accordance with the political objectives or cultural goals prevalent in their respective city-states. Hence, adhering to the pluralistic mode of thinking and patriotic spirit common in Florence during the first half of the Quattrocento, Brunetti enriched the classical

classical rebirth extended beyond the fifteenth century. Indeed, his claim that Rome dominated the ancient world both politically and culturally and his belief that such supremacy could be revived in the modern age served as a source of inspiration and as consolation for many a sixteenth-century Italian intellectual during the dire years of foreign invasions. Thus in a work published shortly before the Sack of Rome of 1527, the distinguished antiquarian Andrea Fulvio states in a Petrarch-like manner that contemporary Rome still retained a certain shadow of its ancient majesty; consequently, the people the world over had recourse to it as does the body to the head.⁸³ No less a pragmatic thinker than Machiavelli was seduced by the optimism and idealism of Petrarch. In his *Prince* (XXVI, 127–135), while considering freeing Italy of its foreign invaders he finds hope and inspiration in Petrarch's famous canzone "Italia mia" (CXXXVIII, lines 93–96), where the poet alludes to an Italian redemption to be achieved through renewed ancient valor.⁸⁴

strain he inherited from Petrarch with the pre-Roman history of the Etruscans and the post-Roman accomplishments of Dante (Bruni believed that Dante was endowed with Ciceronian virtues). The amalgamation of the classical with the pre- and post-Roman constitutes an important feature of the scholarship of Bruni. On this see Anna Maria Cabrini, "Le *Historiae* del Bruni: risultati e ipotesi di una ricerca sulle fonti," in *Leonardo Bruni, cancelliere della repubblica di Firenze*, ed. Paolo Viti (Florence, 1990), pp. 247–319 and Angelo Mazzocco, "Leonardo Bruni's Notion of *Virtus*," in *Studies in the Renaissance: Essays in Memory of Arnolfo B. Ferruolo*, eds. Gian Paolo Biasin, Albert N. Mancini, and Nicolas Perella (Naples, 1985), pp. 105–15.

⁸³ "Retinet adhuc Roma quandam priscae majestatis umbram ut gentes ex toto orbe tanque membra ad caput recurrant." *Antiquitates Urbis* (Rome: Macello Silber[?], 1527). fol. XCVI.

⁸⁴ "Let your illustrious house [the Medici's] then take up this cause [the cause of freeing Italy] with the spirit and the hope with which one undertakes a truly just enterprise so that under the banner of your house the country may be ennobled and under its hospices the verses of Petrarch may come true:

Then Roman valor shall the foe engage,
And win swift triumph o'er barbarian rage;
For martial virtue, our forefathers' pride,
In true Italian hearts has never died."

Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, ed. & trans. Thomas G. Bergin (New York, 1947, repr. 1986), p. 78. It has been noted that the call to war implicit in this segment of the *Prince* contradicts the overall pacifistic tone of "Italia mia." Gennaro Sasso, "Il ventiseiesimo del *Principe*. L'uso del Petrarca," *La Cultura* 33 (1995), 183–215. That Petrarch's poem is imbued with a strong pacifistic sentiment there is no doubt. However, the poet's objective in "Italia mia" is not peace in absolute terms, but peace among the Italian potentates. As such his call for peace does not preclude a war against foreigners (the German mercenaries, for example). For a fuller discussion of this issue see my "Un'idea politica in Petrarca?" in *Petrarca politico*, Istituto storico per il medio evo, Rome (forthcoming).

What the humanists thought of Petrarch's rebirth of ancient culture matters also because their view of the poet's *renovatio* as a broad, historically significant undertaking counteracts the reductive perception of Renaissance humanism and of the Renaissance in general prevalent in some segments of contemporary scholarship. Though not all-inclusive, the interpretation of Renaissance humanism provided by the modern scholars we have examined above is not reductive by any means. Weiss's goal, for example, is not to deny the importance and impact of Renaissance humanism, which he sees as been fueled "by a conscious desire for a 'renovatio studiorum' and hopes of a new golden age," but to broaden its temporal periphery from the era of Petrarch back to that of Lovato dei Lovati. As such he makes an important contribution to Renaissance studies. Much the same could be said of the Billanoviches and Witt. As to Kristeller, his interpretation of Renaissance humanism is much broader than it might at first appear.⁸⁵ Such, however, is not the case with many contemporary students of the Renaissance. Indeed, as it happened in the early decades of the twentieth century,⁸⁶ many a contemporary scholar is questioning, albeit for different reasons and with different scholarly strategies, the integrity of Renaissance humanism and its contribution to the cultural life of Italy and Europe. Renaissance humanism was nothing more than a rhetorical enterprise devoid of creativity and inferior, therefore, to medieval Scholasticism. Some scholars have gone so far as to deny the very existence of a Renaissance—there was no cultural movement with distinctive and widespread characteristics of rebirth to justify the advent of a cultural renewal.⁸⁷ The fact is, however, that at least in Italy, as argued magisterially by Kristeller, the Renaissance was a cultural reality: "... there can be no doubt that there was an Italian Renaissance, that is, a cultural Renaissance of Italy, not so much in contrast with the Middle Ages in general or with the French Middle Ages, but very definitely in contrast with the Italian Middle Ages."⁸⁸ This being the case, the humanists'

⁸⁵ On Weiss and Kristeller, see above, pp. 7–8 and 13–17.

⁸⁶ See above, pp. 4–6.

⁸⁷ On this cf. Paul Grendler, "The Italian Renaissance in the Past Seventy Years: Humanism, Social History, and Early Modern in Anglo-American and Italian Scholarship," in *The Italian Renaissance in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Allen J. Grieco, Michael Rocke, and Fiorella Giuffredi Superbi (Florence, 2002), pp. 15–23.

⁸⁸ "Humanism and Scholasticism in the Italian Renaissance," (see above n. 12) p. 95. Kristeller refers to Boccaccio's famous letter to Pizzinga as an affirmation of this cultural revival. *Ibid.* and n. 13. In this letter Boccaccio notes that it is his hope that, having lost its political and military dominance and its overall cultural supremacy, contemporary Rome may reacquire at least the poetic skills of antiquity so that it may once again demonstrate

reliance on the term *renovatio* and its variants (*revocaret*, *rivocò*, *repararit*, *aperuit viam*, etc.) in assessing Petrarch's notion of classical rebirth attests to the existence of an Italian Renaissance. Moreover, by demonstrating that the poet's notion of classical rebirth and humanism in general were comprehensive and multifaceted, the humanists take us beyond the reductive interpretation prevalent in some segments of contemporary scholarship and make it possible for us, therefore, to gain a more accurate understanding of Petrarch's *renovatio* and of the Renaissance movement in general.

some of its ancient majesty among the barbaric nations: "... ut inter barbaras nationes Roma saltem aliquid veteris majestatis possit ostendere." *Opere latine minori*, ed. Massèra (see above, n. 19), p. 197. We could add that Petrarch's and his followers' call for a re-classicizing of contemporary style and institutions and their insistence on reconstituting and appropriating ancient values and ideas also attest to the sort of cultural Renaissance noted by Kristeller. Unfortunately much of this literature, which is usually designated "antiquarian," is often maligned, when not altogether ignored, by present-day scholars.

ANGELO POLIZIANO, ALDO MANUZIO, THEODORE GAZA,
GEORGE OF TREBIZOND, AND CHAPTER 90 OF
THE *MISCELLANEORUM CENTURIA PRIMA*
(WITH AN EDITION AND TRANSLATION)

John Monfasani

One of the advantages of the Kristeller interpretation of Renaissance humanism is that it does not require us to ascribe an ideology to a humanist or to measure a humanist in terms of a supposed common ideology. Such an approach serves us well in studying Angelo Poliziano, unquestionably one of the greatest of the Renaissance humanists. His writings and career fit comfortably within the cycle of the *studia humanitatis*. He, of course, was a client of the Medici, but trying to explain his work in terms of political and/or ideological categories will in the end prove terribly reductive or misleading. My purpose here is not to give a synthetic interpretation of Poliziano or of humanism. But it is significant that in explaining below Poliziano's strong views on a range of issues connected with chapter 90 of the *Miscellanea*, I had no need to resort to any of the ideologies and motivations variously ascribed to humanists in general and to Medicean humanists in particular. My documentary "sampling" is very tiny and heterogeneous, but I hope that it does aid us in understanding Poliziano and his work a little better.

The Philology of Melancholy

Melancholy provoked a substantial literature in antiquity.¹ For later ages the *locus classicus* of this literature was Problem 1 of Book 30 of the pseudo-Aristotelian *Problemata*.² So it is not surprising that Angelo Poliziano took

¹ See Raymond Klibansky, Erwin Panofsky, and Fritz Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy: Studies in the History of Natural Philosophy, Religion, and Art* (London, 1964); Helmut Flashar, *Melancholie und Melancholiker in den medizinischen Theorien der Antike* (Berlin, 1966); and Jackie Pigeaud, *La maladie de l'âme: étude sur la relation de l'âme et du corps dans la tradition médico-philosophique antique* (Paris, 1981).

² This is so much the case that Klibansky, Panofsky, Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy*, pp. 18–41, gives the Greek text of this problem, along with an English translation and an extensive commentary; but now see Aristotle, *L'homme de génie et la mélancolie: Problème XXX*, 1, trans. and annot. Jackie Pigeaud (Paris, 1988).

an interest in the text of this Aristotelian treatment of melancholy, especially since it was the Renaissance, from Marsilio Ficino's *De Vita* to Albrecht Dürer's *Melencolia I* to Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, that elevated the malady to a central concern of educated culture. Indeed, Chapter 90 of the *Miscellaneorum centuria prima*, where Poliziano discusses *Probl.* 30:1 is one of the better known chapters of the *Miscellanea*. Poliziano published the *Miscellaneorum centuria prima* at Florence in 1489. Yet, despite the fame of the *Miscellanea* in the history of philology, Chapter 90 has never received its due in the history of philology or in the history of Renaissance humanism. Consequently, although Chapter 90 is mainly known for its discussion of Theodore Gaza and George of Trebizond, I shall start with its discussion of *Probl.* 30:1.

By Poliziano's day, Theodore Gaza's translation of the *Problemata* had become the standard version. Poliziano charged that Gaza made a wretched series of errors when he translated a key passage (953a17–18) of *Probl.* 30:1.³ The passage in question was in fact corrupt in all the extant Greek manuscripts. As Poliziano rightly understood, the senseless ἐν τῆι of the manuscripts needed to be corrected to ἐν Οἴτῃ so that the passage has Hercules dying on Mount Oeta. With that simple emendation Poliziano could make sense of the whole passage in which Hercules is described as the prototypical melancholic character. Gaza recognized that there was a corruption, but in dropping the corrupt phrase and by misconstruing the rest, he made a ludicrous hash of the passage, as Poliziano pointed out in detail. As I show elsewhere, Poliziano's explanation of the passage is masterful.⁴ My only purpose in calling attention to it here is to note its subsequent history. The *editio princeps* of the Greek text of Aristotle, published by Aldo Manuzio in Venice between 1494 and 1498, incorporated Poliziano's emendation of 953a17–18 without any special notice. Nor was any notice really necessary. Any contemporary capable of reading the Aldine Greek Aristotle would have been also familiar with Poliziano's *Miscellaneorum centuria prima*. For how long after 1498 this remained a safe assumption one may debate. The essential point is that whereas up to today no manuscript used in preparing the Greek text of Aristotle contains the correct reading, every edition, starting with the *princeps*, nonetheless offers the correct reading—but without any acknowledgement that this reading is

³ See Appendix §§ 16–40 below.

⁴ See my "George of Trebizond's Critique of Theodore Gaza's Translation of the Aristotelian *Problemata*," in *Aristotle's Problemata in Different Times and Tongues*, eds. Pieter De Leemans and Michèle Goyens. *Mediaevalia Lovaniensia*, 1st ser., 39 (Leuven, 2006), 273–92.

an *emendatio Politiana*.⁵ It may seem like bringing coals to Newcastle to have modern critical editions credit Poliziano with the emendation, but historical truth requires that they do so.

Friends and Foes

Chapter 90 begins not with a discussion of *Probl.* 30:1 but with a sort of *apologia pro opera sua*.⁶ Poliziano lashed out against his critics, demanding to be judged not by the ignorant but by the likes of Lorenzo de' Medici and the three scholarly luminaries, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Ermolao Barbaro,⁷ and Girolamo Donà,⁸ whom he had already termed the *triumviri litterarii* in a letter of 1485.⁹ Lorenzo was, of course, Poliziano's patron while Giovanni Pico was Poliziano's dear friend,¹⁰ and Barbaro and Donà were distinguished scholars with whom Poliziano had developed something of a mutual admiration society in the 1480s. But Poliziano never named his critics.¹¹ All he would let slip is that they were small in number. Later on in the chapter he acknowledged the existence of a single upstart whose *quisquiliae* were not worth answering. Although we know a good deal about Poliziano's critics after the publication of the *Miscellaneorum centuria*

⁵ Modern critical editions, starting with Immanuel Bekker's 1831 edition of the Aristotelian corpus for the Berlin Academy, to the Charles Émile Ruelle-Hermann Knoellinger-Josef Klek 1922 Teubner edition of the *Problemata*, to Pierre Louis's 1991–94 Belles Lettres edition of the *Problemata*, all note the error in the manuscripts without citing any source for the correct reading. I have also checked the following Aristotelian *opera omnia*: Basel 1531 (ed. Erasmus), Basel 1550 (*ibid.*), Frankfurt 1584–87 (ed. Friedrich Sylburg), Lyons 1597 (ed. Giulio Pace), and Geneva 1605 (ed. Isaac Casaubon).

⁶ See Appendix §§ 1–15 below.

⁷ On him see Emilio Bigi, "Barbaro, Ermolao (Almorò)," DBI 6 (Rome, 1964), pp. 96–99; and Vittore Branca, *La sapienza civile: Studi sull'umanesimo a Venezia* (Florence, 1998), pp. 59–195; his *magnum opus* has received a critical edition: *Hermolai Barbari Castigationes Plinianae et in Pomponium Melam*, ed. Giovanni Pozzi, 4 vols. (Padua, 1973–79).

⁸ On him see P. Rigo, "Donà (Donati, Donato), Girolamo," in DBI 40 (Rome, 1991), pp. 741–53. Important for the dates of Poliziano's correspondance with Donà is Mario Martelli, "Il Libro delle epistole di Angelo Poliziano," *Interpres*, 1 (1978), 184–255.

⁹ See Angelo Poliziano, *Opera omnia*, ed. Ida Maier, 3 vols. (Turin, 1970–71), 1:24: "Picoque item [Girolamo Donà] et fortasse Hermolao, triumviris scilicet literariis."

¹⁰ On the close relationship, see Paolo Viti, "Pico e Poliziano," in *Pico, Poliziano e l'umanesimo di fine Quattrocento, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana 4 novembre–31 dicembre 1994. Catalogo*, ed. Paolo Viti (Florence, 1994), pp. 103–25.

¹¹ Poliziano, to be sure, was at times the aggressor. His criticism of Domizio Calderini and his supporters is well known; for his criticism of Beroaldo the Elder, see also Francesco Lo Monaco, "Poliziano e Beroaldo: Le *Annotationes Beroaldi* del Poliziano," in *Rinascimento*, 2nd ser. 32 (1992), 103–65; and Konrad Krautter, "Angelo Poliziano als Kritiker von Filippo Beroaldo," *Res Publica Litterarum* 4 (1981), 315–30.

prima in 1489,¹² the only critic I have found in the literature who attacked Poliziano pre-1489 was Bartolomeo Fonzio.¹³ We have no evidence suggesting that Poliziano publicly responded. So, in the absence of another candidate, one may hypothesize Fonzio is the anonymous third-rater of Chapter 90 whom Poliziano distained to answer.¹⁴ And if this hypothesis is correct, we can further hypothesize that those in the know in Florence and elsewhere knew that Poliziano meant Fonzio in Chapter 90.

Poliziano passed over in silence one other person in Chapter 90, namely, Marsilio Ficino. Inasmuch as Poliziano had called on men of judgment and erudition to stand as his judges, inasmuch as Poliziano had known Ficino since at least 1469, inasmuch as the philological purpose of Chapter 90 was to clarify a passage in the most important classical text on melancholy, and inasmuch as Ficino was the person “who really gave shape to the idea of the melancholy man of genius” in the Renaissance “and revealed it to the rest of Europe,”¹⁵ Marsilio Ficino was, as in the title of a recent Coen Brothers’ movie, “The Man Who Wasn’t There.” True, as is well known, by the 1480s Poliziano was not especially sympathetic to Ficino’s brand of Platonism and astral teachings.¹⁶ His snubbing of the old Platonist was unfair, nonetheless, especially since, as Al Wolters as shown,¹⁷ even in his maturity, Poliziano was distinctly inferior to Ficino in translating a philosophical text. It also does not lack for a touch of the pathetic, as we shall see.

The *editio princeps* of Poliziano’s *Miscellaneorum centuria prima* carries the date 19 September 1489. The printer’s colophon of the *editio princeps* of

¹² See Vincenzo Fera, “Il dibattito umanistico sui *Miscellanea*,” in *Agnolo Poliziano, poeta, scrittore, filologo*, eds. Vincenzo Fera and Mario Martelli (Florence, 1998), pp. 333–64; also idem, “Tra Poliziano e Beroaldo: L’ultimo scritto filologico di Giorgio Merula,” *Studi umanistici* 2 (1991), 7–88. Also useful is Armando F. Verde, *Lo Studio Fiorentino*, 3 vols. (Florence, 1985), 2:494–95, 771–75, 840–42.

¹³ On Fonzio’s hostility to Poliziano, see Paolo Viti, “Poliziano e Fonzio: Motivi e forme di una polemica,” in *Agnolo Poliziano, poeta, scrittore, filologo*, pp. 527–40; Lucia A. Ciapponi, “Bartolomeo Fonzio e la prima centuria del *Miscellanea* del Poliziano,” *Italia medioevale e umanistica* 23 (1980), 165–77; useful also is R. Zaccaria, “Della Fonte (Fonzio), Bartolomeo,” *DBI* 36 (Rome, 1988), pp. 808–14.

¹⁴ Poliziano did not add any marginal identification in the copy he himself inscribed to Alessandro Sarti (Harvard, Houghton Libr., Inc. 6149 [A]) nor are there any marginalia to this chapter in Bartolomeo Fonzio’s copy (*ibid.*, Inc. 6149 [B]).

¹⁵ Klibansky, Panofsky, Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy*, p. 255.

¹⁶ For the relationship between Ficino and Poliziano, see especially Vittore Branca, “Tra Ficino ‘Orfeo ispirato’ e Poliziano ‘Ercole ironico,’” in *Marsilio Ficino e il ritorno di Platone. Studi e documenti*, ed. Gian Carlo Garfagnini, 2 vols. (Florence, 1986), 2:459–75; see also James Hankins, “The Myth of the Platonic Academy of Florence,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 44 (1991), 429–75, now to be read in his *Humanism and Platonism in the Italian Renaissance*, 2 vols. (Rome, 2003–04), 2:219–72, at 250.

¹⁷ Al Wolters, “Poliziano as a Translator of Plotinus,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 40 (1987), 452–64.

Ficino's *De vita*, his masterwork on melancholy, is dated 3 December 1489. But Ficino added a postscript dated several months earlier, 15 September 1489, in which he told Piero Guicciardini, one of the addressees of this defense of *De vita*:

go now, go quickly and summon Poliziano, our Hercules . . . For you know how many barbarous monsters now devastating Latium Poliziano our Hercules has attacked, destroyed, and killed . . . This man, therefore, will immediately beat with his club and consume in flames even a hundred heads of the Hydra threatening our books/children.¹⁸

In Chapter 90 Poliziano elucidated specifically the discussion of Hercules in *Probl.* 30:1. Given how much Ficino would have been interested in this particular emendation of Poliziano's and given the myriad opportunities the two men would have had to talk to each other before the publication of the *Miscellanea*, it is hardly implausible to suppose that Ficino was familiar with the emendation of *Probl.* 30:1, which was published just a few days after he himself completed the postscript to *De vita*. But even if he did not know about the emendation when he wrote the postscript, it is sad to see him asking for Poliziano's support at the very time Poliziano was snubbing him. Five years later, a month before Poliziano died on 28/29 September 1494, Ficino was still seeking to win him over, calling on him to be his Hercules and assuring him that despite what he seems to have said in *De vita* and *De sole*, he fully agreed with Pico's refutation of the *astrologica portenta*.¹⁹ Poliziano took Ficino to have sung a palinode.²⁰ So he responded to his *epistola pulcherrima* by assuring him that it was perfectly proper for a philosopher to change his mind and to say one thing publicly for the sake of the *rudi* and hold a different opinion in private among the *eruditi*.²¹ Having had the satisfaction of accepting, as he thought, Ficino's surrender to his and Pico's criticisms, Poliziano finally thanked Ficino for the *cognomen* of Hercules and invited him to escape the August heat by visiting his, Poliziano's, *rusculum* up on the heights of Fiesole.

¹⁸ As translated by Carol Kaske in Marsilio Ficino, *Three Books on Life*, eds. and trans. Carol Kaske and John R. Clarke (Binghamton, 1989), p. 401.

¹⁹ Poliziano, *Opera omnia*, 1:134; and Marsilio Ficino, *Opera omnia*, 2 vols. (Basel, 1576; repr. Turin, 1962), 1:958. This letter is discussed by Branca, "Tra Ficino 'Orfeo ispirato' e Poliziano 'Ercole ironico,'" pp. 472–73; and by Carol V. Kaske, "Ficino's Shifting Attitude Towards Astrology in the *De Vita Coelitus Comparanda*, the Letter to Poliziano, and the *Apologia* to the Cardinals," in *Marsilio Ficino e il ritorno di Platone*, 2:372–81.

²⁰ Kaske, "Ficino's Shifting Attitude," p. 373, agrees with this reading: "Poliziano regarded the letter basically as a palinode. . . ."

²¹ Poliziano, *Opera*, 1:135; Paul O. Kristeller, *Supplementum Ficinianum*, 2 vols. (Florence, 1937), 2:278–79.

Theodore Gaza and George of Trebizond

Poliziano's criticism of Gaza in Chapter 90 is the main reason why this chapter is well known. It really was a scandal. It is also a bit puzzling in a surprising way, as we shall see. By the time he died in 1475, Gaza had achieved cult status among young humanists, and certainly among the brilliant Hellenists Poliziano, Ermolao Barbaro, and Girolamo Donà. Poliziano wrote three Greek epitaphs in Gaza's honor; Barbaro told Pope Sixtus IV in 1480, in the preface to his translation of Themistius, that though a Greek, Gaza had surpassed all Latin translators;²² and Donà, we are informed, perfected his Greek by studying Gaza's translations. So now, in a section of the *Miscellaneorum centuria prima* addressed in effect to Barbaro and Donà, for Poliziano not only to lambaste Gaza as an incompetent translator of Aristotle's *Problemata*, but also to expose him as a plagiarist stealing from his despised rival George of Trebizond when translating Aristotle's *De animalibus*, was an extraordinary turn of events. Giorgio Merula, for instance, violently attacked Poliziano for daring to criticize Gaza so crudely.²³ In point of fact, as Vincenzo Fera and Giovanni Pozzi have shown, both Poliziano and Barbaro disabused themselves of their early enthusiasm for Gaza in the 1480s.²⁴ Fera and Pozzi rightly point to Poliziano's and Barbaro's growing philological sophistication and increased awareness of the liber-

²² Ermolao Barbaro, *Epistolae, orationes et carmina*, ed. Vittore Branca, 2 vols. (Florence, 1943), 1:9.

²³ See Laura Perotto Sali, "L'opuscolo inedito di Giorgio Merula contro i *Miscellanea* di Angelo Poliziano," *Interpres* 1 (1978), 146–83, esp. 180–82. Ironically, Merula, p. 182, called attention to George's *Protectio Aristotelis Problematum* not to suggest any problem with Gaza's translations, but as proof of George's ignorance of Latin *elegantia* and therefore of Poliziano's *licentia* and *petulantia* in preferring George to Gaza. For an acute analysis of Merula's inconsistent position, see Silvia Rizzo, "Il latino del Poliziano," in *Agnolo Poliziano, poeta, scrittore, filologo*, pp. 83–125, at 109–15. See also Fera, "Il dibattito umanistico," pp. 335–36; Giovanni Pozzi, "Appunti sul *Corollarium* del Barbaro," in *Tra latino e volgare: per Carlo Dionisotti*, eds. Gabriella B. Trezzini et al., 2 vols. (Padua, 1975), pp. 632–34; and Renata Fabbri, "Per la polemica Poliziano-Merula," in *Agnolo Poliziano, poeta, scrittore, filologo*, pp. 551–56. Merula had once been less favorably disposed toward Gaza; see Vincenzo Fera, "Poliziano, Ermolao Barbaro e Plinio," in *Una famiglia veneziana nella storia: I Barbaro. Atti del convegno di studi in occasione del quinto centenario della morte dell'umanista Ermolao* (Venice, 1996), pp. 202–03. Merula had long been hostile to George, however; see my *George of Trebizond: A Biography and a Study of His Rhetoric and Logic* (Leiden, 1976), p. 292 n. 207 *ad finem*.

²⁴ Fera, "Poliziano, Ermolao Barbaro e Plinio," pp. 193–234, esp. 210–15; idem, "Un laboratorio filologico di fine Quattrocento: la *Naturalis historia*," *Formative Stages of Classical Traditions: Latin Texts from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, eds. Oronzo Pecere and Michael D. Reeve (Spoleto, 1995), pp. 435–66, esp. 450–51; and Pozzi, "Appunti sul *Corollarium*," 2:619–40, esp. 627–40. See also my "The Pseudo-Aristotelian *Problemata* and Aristotle's *De Animalibus* in the Renaissance," now in my *Greeks and Latins in Renaissance Italy: Studies on Humanism and Philosophy in the 15th Century* (Aldershot, 2004), study 6, esp. p. 211.

ties Gaza had taken with the Aristotelian text as causing this change of perspective. I would suggest that in the case of Poliziano Latin chauvinism also played a role. In the very first chapter of the *Miscellanea* Poliziano famously defended Cicero against the “calumny” of the Byzantine émigré John Argyropoulos. In passing, he also took a swipe at Gaza’s remark in the preface to his translation of Aristotle’s *De animalibus* that Cicero was perverse to call Greek impoverished compared to Latin. In Chapter 90, he condemned Gaza for the erroneous translation of a key passage and then proceeded to expose him as a plagiarist. What is especially revealing in Poliziano’s praise of Pico a few paragraphs earlier is his Latin chauvinism. Poliziano forecast that through Pico philosophy was about to reach its apex and would do so specifically in Latin dress. Not by chance Poliziano also chose to praise Barbaro for forging a fresh philosophical vocabulary out of the resources of Latin.

What I find puzzling is not that Poliziano had harsh words for Gaza, but that he was not harsher still. Gaza not only almost continually rewrote in small and large ways the Aristotelian *Problemata*; he also radically reorganized them. Thus what was *Probl.* 30:1 in the Greek manuscripts became *Probl.* 19:1 in Gaza’s translation. A 1501 edition of Gaza’s translation literally retrofitted Gaza’s rendition so that it conformed to the order found in the medieval Latin commentary of Pietro d’Abano and therefore, though this was not the intention, also to the order found in the Greek manuscripts.²⁵ For the rest of the Renaissance, readers remained unaware of Gaza’s radical reordering of the *Problemata*. But Poliziano was writing more than a decade earlier when all the manuscripts and the two incunabula of Gaza’s translation retained his reordering. Poliziano remarked upon the liberties Gaza took even in the short passage that he, Poliziano, quoted, but he remained silent about the location of *Probl.* 30:1 in Gaza’s translation. I can only conclude that he never really studied Gaza’s translation. He was really only interested in his translation of the *De animalibus*, which he cites multiple times in the *Miscellanea*. In the case of the *Problemata*, he was exclusively interested in *Probl.* 30:1. So, having read the problem in a Greek manuscript and diagnosed the corruption described in Chapter 90, he sought out Gaza’s rendering. He doubtless had to fuss a bit before he found it; but once he found it and realized that Gaza’s was no better than the medieval translation (by Bartolomeo of Messina) in rendering the passage, he had no further interest in the *Problemata*. He did not seek out and compare George of Trebizond’s translation of the *Problemata* with Gaza’s

²⁵ See my “Pseudo-Aristotelian *Problemata*,” pp. 212, 217–18.

as he, in fact, had done in the case of the *De animalibus*, an exercise that led him to accuse Gaza of plagiarism. Nor did Poliziano know George's invective against Gaza's translation, the *Protectio Aristotelis Problematum*. Consequently, it would seem that only an interest in the doctrine of melancholy and not any wider philological concern with the *Problemata* drove Poliziano to study *Probl.* 30:1.

George the Pornoboscus

In what is probably the only philological elucidation of a contemporary work in the *Miscellanea*, Poliziano explained in Chapter 90 that in his famous Greek *Grammar* Gaza called George "this Pornoboscus" ("brothel keeper") on the analogy of the ancient grammarian George Choiroboscus ("pig herder").²⁶ But if a scholar goes to any printed copy of Gaza's Greek *Grammar* he or she will find neither *pornoboscus* nor an explicit reference to George. The closest one will come to what Poliziano was referring to is perhaps a manuscript marginal note, such as is found in two copies of the 1495 Aldine *editio princeps* of Gaza's *Grammar* in the Vatican Library. In Incun. II.128 the celebrated Greek émigré Janus Lascaris wrote ὁ πορνοβοσκὸς Τραπεζούντιος ("Trapezuntius the Pornoboscus") in the margin of sign. λ β, next to the words τί δὴ ποτέ τις ἀγνοεῖ ("what a certain party once is ignorant of")²⁷ of the main text. At the very same point in the text of Incun. II.152, the distinguished humanist Scipione Forteguerra ("Cateromachus") erased τις in the main text and replaced it with ὁ πορνοβοσκὸς Τραπεζούντιος.²⁸ I have also found this marginalium in another copy of the 1495 Aldine edition.²⁹ Perhaps Lascaris and Forteguerra made the changes under the influence of Poliziano's *Miscellanea*. But the far more likely explanation is that they both had access to a manuscript of Gaza's

²⁶ He was active in Constantinople in the ninth century; see *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1991), 1:425; and Herbert Hunger, *Die Hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, 2 vols. (Munich, 1978), *ad indicem sub v.* Choiroboskos, Georgios.

²⁷ Bk. 4, at the very end, in the chapter, Περὶ Συνδέσμου ("On the Conjunction"), near the end of the subsection on the συνδέσμος διαζευκτικός. For this copy see William J. Sheehan, *Incunabula Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae*, 4 vols. (Vatican City, 1997), 2:540, no. G-22.

²⁸ See Sheehan, *ibid.*

²⁹ Namely, Columbia University, Butler Library, Rare Book and Manuscript Room, Incun. Goff G-110, copy 2 (Plimpton 485; Payne Binding). On the other hand, none of the three copies at Harvard (Houghton Libr., Inc. 5548 [A], Inc. 5548 [B], and WKR 3.4.4) have the note.

Grammar. I have not made a systematic study of the manuscripts of Gaza's *Grammar*, but I can say that in some manuscripts the reading at this point is exactly as Forteguerra corrected his printed copy.³⁰ Obviously, in 1489, six years before the *editio princeps*, Poliziano could only have been looking at a manuscript of Gaza's *Grammar*. In other words, either Aldo Manuzio had sanitized Gaza's text or had relied on a manuscript that had already been sanitized.³¹ Given the great admiration Manuzio had for Gaza and lack of equal regard for George of Trebizond, I doubt very much that he changed the text. I also doubt that a scribe would take it upon himself to censure Gaza in this one passage. So I suspect that Gaza himself was responsible for a later redaction of the *Grammar* in which he substituted τις for ὁ πορνοβοσκός Τραπεζούντιος. In any case, since the Aldine edition provided the base text of all subsequent printed editions of Gaza's *Grammar*,³² once the generation of humanists who had learned Greek using a manuscript of Gaza's *Grammar* had died out, the sanitized Aldine version became the canonical version and Poliziano's nice philological comment lost its referent for the rest of the Renaissance and beyond.

³⁰ See the Vatican's Vat. Gr. 13, f. 181r, copied by Gaza's relative and friend Andronicus Callistus; however, another manuscript possibly copied by Callistus but definitely annotated by him, Toledo, Bibl. Capitular, 100-2, f. 154r, reads ὁ Τραπεζούντιος without the qualifier πορνοβοσκός. We seem to be dealing with the author's deliberate variants in this passage, but for now deliberate scribal variants cannot be completely discounted. For instance, the Biblioteca Laurentiana in Florence has three manuscripts of the *Grammar* copied by Demetrius Trivolis, who worked as a scribe for Cardinal Bessarion and knew Gaza and George of Trebizond personally. Plut. 55.15, f. 181v, reads τί δὴ ποτέ ὁ πορνοβοσκός Τραπεζούντιος ἀγνόει. Plut. 55.16, f. 85v, has the same thing except that above the line between Τραπεζούντιος and ἀγνόει Trivolis added: ὁ Κρής. Plut. 55.12, f. 127v, initially had the same thing too, but then Trivolis cancelled πορνοβοσκός. A fourth Laurenziana MS, Gadd. 125, f. 176v, has as its original form the same text as Plut. 55.12 after the cancellation, i.e., τί δὴ ποτέ ὁ Τραπεζούντιος ἀγνόει. Constantine Lascaris's autograph manuscript in Madrid (f. 47r of 4635 of the Biblioteca Nacional) reads exactly like Plut. 55.15, while the manuscript John Rhosos copied in Rome in 1481 (Madrid, BN, 4590, f. 205r) has exactly the text of Plut. 55.16 with the words ὁ Κρής as an original part of the text.

³¹ Manuzio does not say anything about the manuscript(s) he used in his preface to the edition; see Aldo Manuzio *editore. dediche. prefazioni, note ai testi*, intro. Carlo Dionisotti, ed. and tr. Giovanni Orlandi (Milan, 1975), pp. 7-9.

³² I have not consulted all editions, but of those that I have, they all have *tis* instead of *pornoboscos* Τραπεζούντιος.

APPENDIX

CHAPTER 90 OF POLIZIANO'S *MISCELLANEORUM CENTURIA PRIMA*: LATIN TEXT AND ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Without any pretense of preparing a critical edition, but merely in the hope of having a reasonably reliable text, I have based the Latin text on the *editio princeps* printed by Antonio Miscomini in Florence in 1489 (Hain-Copinger 13221), sign. n 6r–o 2r, against which I have collated *Omnia Opera Angeli Politiani et Alia Quaedam Lectu Digna* (Venice: Aldus Manutius, 1498; Hain-Copinger 13218 ; which has been reprinted: Rome: Bibliopola, 1968), sign I 3v–5v; *Angeli Politiani Opera* (Basel: Nicolaus Episcopus, 1553), pp. 301–303 (this edition is reproduced as vol. 1 in Angelo Poliziano, *Opera Omnia*, 3 vols., ed. Ida Maier [Turin, 1970–71]); and Hideo Katayama, “A Study of the *Miscellanea* [in Japanese]” in *Gogaku Bungaku Ronbunshu* (University of Tokyo, Faculty of Literature) no. 7, 1981, pp. 167–428, at pp. 334–40. I owe a photocopy of Professor Katayama’s edition to the kind offices of Professor Morimichi Watanabe, whom I take the opportunity to thank here. Katayama collated the *editio princeps* as well as the *editio Aldina* and the *editio Basiliensis* of 1553.

I thank Professor Robert Ulery for help in rendering the opening passage of Chapter 90. For the text and translation of the Greek poem at the end of the chapter I have relied on Filippomaria Pontani’s edition of Poliziano’s *Liber Epigrammatum Graecorum* (Rome, 2002), 72–78. All mistakes in the edition and translation remain mine alone.

Sigla: **A** = editio Aldina; **B** = editio Basiliensis; **K** = editio Katayama; **P** = editio princeps.

Caput LXXXX

Qui vir Theodorus Gaza quantumque tamen lapsus in Aristotelis Problemate verso

1 Non recuso quin sub censuram sub aleamque veniat quaecumque hoc erit de quo scribam, dum ne sint in hoc albo duae mihi maxime suspectae litterariae pestes, inscitia invidiae, 2 dum ne quis mihi *amusoteros* (ut verbo utar quo Symmachus), dum ne quis opicus, dum ne quis durus et contumax et in hominis verba quam in veri fidem iuratus contingat iudex. 3 Quod si iudices etiam nuncupandi, non Tarentinos equidem et Consentinos et Siculos mea ista legere, sicuti sua quaedam Lucilius, sed Latinos homines, Graecae litteraturae non ignaros, non Iunium Congium volo, 4 sed Scipionem, sed *doctissimum omnium Persium*, atque Rutilium, hoc est, siqui sunt illis compares, macti prudentia ingenio doctrinaque viri, ad quorum iudicium iure sit elaborandum.

5 Qualis, puta, si liceat, is ipse est qui mihi instrumenta studiorum tam multa otiumque altissimum suppeditat, avis atavisque potens, Medices Laurentius, Florentinae reipublicae columen. 6 Cuius cum iudicium illud circumspectissimum et naturalem quandam mentis altitudinem maximae quaeque in actu rerum vel civitates experiuntur vel principes, 7 tum eundem in litteris et humanitatis ac sapientiae studiis, ei denique non admirantur, qui non penitus, ut ipsi, qui non introrsus inspexerunt. 8 Qualis est item Ioannis Picus hic meus e Mirandulanis principibus absolutissimum naturae opus, a quo philosophia Latine iam meditans loqui, summum, puto, fastigium accipiet.

9 Quales praeterea duo illi, sed una devincti amoris copula, Veneti patricii sunt Hermolaus Barbarus, 10 barbariae hostis acerrimus, qui Latinae philosophiae velut arma instrumentumque verborum sic aut *aure diligentissima terget* aut *incude nova fabricatur* 11 ut ob ipsius industriam iam nunc paene in isto quidem genere vel nitore vel copia vivamus ex pari cum Graecis, 12 et Hieronymus Donatus, vir nescio utrum gravior an doctior, an etiam humanior, certe omni lepore affluens, omni venustate. 13 Cuius tamen ob id vereor ne levior cuiquam censura videatur quoniam me pulcherrimo carmine sed et epistola una atque altera mire laudavit. 14 Licet enim tantum boni de me ipso, qui multum a tolerabili, ne dum a perfecto,

6 maximae BK : maxime P : maxime A.

absum, pudeat credere, magis tamen tanto viro pudet non credere talia de me, sic, ut apparet, ex animo affirmanti. **15** Quare istis quidem paucis aut eorum (siqui sunt) consimilibus, dum nostra haec, qualiacunque sunt arriserint, floccipendo iam nunc imagines penitus *umbrasque larvarum*, quibus *natura esse dicitur* (ut sancti viri verbis utar) *terrere parvulos et in angulis garrere tenebrosis*.

16 Theodorus igitur Gaza vir Graecus, et ut doctis etiam videtur eruditissimus, Aristotelis Problemata vertit in Latinum. **17** Sed in quo Problemate quaeritur, cur homines, qui ingenio claruerunt, vel in studiis philosophiae, vel in republica administranda, vel in carmine pangendo, vel in artibus exercendis, melancholicos omnes fuisse videamus, et alios ita ut etiam vitiis atrae bilis infestarentur, **18** in eo manifestius utique (ni fallor) insigniusque extitit interpretis erratum quam ut excusari iam dissimularive possit. **19** Nam cum illic exempla subiiciat Aristoteles, heroum qui laborasse dicantur atra bile, primumque de Hercule agat, fuisse illum nimirum tali habitudine, **20** signis argumentisque colligit istiusmodi, quod et comitialis morbus sacer ab eo sit dictus, et filios occiderit vecors, ut in Senecae tragoedia tractatur, et antequam obiret, scatentium ulcerum eruptione laboraverit, **21** unde illa, puto, Nexea tunica venerit in fabulam, nam hoc quoque vitium atrae bilis est. **22** Ex quo etiam Lysandro Lacedaemonio proxime ante obitum, genus id, inquit, ulcerum emersit.

23 Theodorus itaque, quod ad filios et ad ulcera Herculis attinet, ita denique interpretatur: “Puerorum quoque,” inquit, “motio mentis idem hoc explicat et eruptio ulcerum quae mortem interdum antecedit,” **24** cum sit ita Graece: καὶ ἡ περὶ τοὺς παῖδας ἔκστασις καὶ ἡ πρὸ τῆς ἀφανίσεως αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ ἐλκῶν ἔκφρασις γενομένη. **25** Neque autem dubitem ex usu esse, antequam ipsi locum vertimus, perpendere diligentius quid sibi illud velit ἐν τῇ, quod ille dissimulat, quaeve de praepositione articuloque illo abiuncto sententia elici possit. **26** Et quidem ego sic arbitror legendum corrigendumque: ἐν Οἴτῃ, ut sit ad verbum sensus: “Et in liberos suos pavor,” seu mavis dicere “mentis excessus, et ante obitum ipsius in Oeta ulcerum eruptio.” **27** Quod autem *pavorem* maluimus aut *mentis excessum* vertere quam, ut iste, *motionem mentis*, quae Graece sit *ecstasis*. **28** Auctorem sequimur in priore, quem Psalmorum probat interpretem Pictaviensis

15 quare istis quidem paucis, aut eorum (siqui sunt) consimilibus *habet PK, om. AB.* || natura : naturae K.

20 colligit : collegit E.

24 ἐν τῇ KB : ἐντῇ AE.

25 abiuncto K.

27 sit : sic A.

Hilarius, in posteriore Hieronymum, qui tamen alicubi solitarium quoque illud *excessus* Latine pro illo *ecstasis* reddidit. **29** Nam pavorem Cicero quoque metum definit esse, mentem loco moventem. Sed de nomine alias. Nunc quod instat.

30 Profert exempla Aristoteles, per quae manifestum fiat, Herculem quoque atra vile vexatum, sicuti dein Aiacem, Bellerophonem, ceterosque ostendit, **31** ut sensus ordo, ratio, praetereaue veritas inexpugnabilis et vinci nescia, nostrae prorsus interpretationi suffragentur. **32** Quorsum enim hic de pueris mente motis in mediis agatur heroibus, aut quae magis aetas a bile hac atra, quem furorem dicimus, quam puerilis abest? **33** Quid autem generalem hanc ulcerum ante obitum eruptionem accipit, quod neque verba significant Aristotelis, et plane illius proposito voluntatique contrarium? **34** Nempe qui probare nitatur ex argumentis quibuspiam atque exemplis, non pueros, non quoslibet atra bile, sed heroas maximosque viros inquietari. **35** Quin illud etiam diligentius cogitandum, sacerne tantum morbus ut Aristoteles ait, an etiam Herculeus, quod de suo Theodorus adicit, appelletur.

36 Atque locum eundem male versum a Petro etiam Aponensi, cui cognomentum ex re Conciliatori factum, naturae rerum ac medicinae consultissimo. **37** Sed, ut tum fuere tempora, parum linguae utriusque perito homine minus equidem indignus. **38** Is autem errantem suo semet indicio prodit, in commentario quodam super haec ipsa Problemata composito. **39** In eas enim se coniecerat angustias, ut explicare nil possit; ac “stuporem sive,” quod ait ipse, “congelationem quae pueris accidat denominari inde” cogatur dicere, hoc est (ut arbitrator) ab Hercule. **40** Quod ego illi tum dedero cum denominationis istius vox quaequam indidem pronuntiabitur.

41 Sed enim Theodori causam facile iam quivis impulsam, prostratam, constrictam sciat, etiam si nihil adiciamus. **42** Quin ipse credo, si revivisceret, et de hoc admoneretur, neutiquam pro recto defenderet, si plus vero daret quam studio potius, **43** ut in duodecim scriptis adsolet, quoniam moti semel paeniteret, concedi sibi postularet, ut calculum reduceret.

44 Nec autem nos haec de eo notaremus, si non plurimi faceremus. **45** Non enim sic dementis otii sumus ut incolumi dignitate nostra velimus eo abuti contra recentem nimiumque iam trivialium nugamentorum proventum, **46** contraque ista, paene dixerim, mendicabula et propudia garrulorum, nescio risune explodenda magis an silentio dissimulanda, quo perpetuo ignobiles inter suas ineptias delitescant. **47** Hoc autem dumtaxat attulimus, non quidem obstrigilandi quod dicitur causa, sed admonendi

43 scriptis : scrupis B.

potius studiosos, qui scribendi onus hoc laboriosissimum pariter invidiosissimumque susceperint, **48** nequid unquam de intentione remittant, neu parcant industriae operaeque, neve indulgeant sibi, aut oneri cedant. **49** Circumspiciant undique, librent, pensent, exigantque singula, **50** nihilque non olfactent, non excutiant, non examinent, non castigent etiam atque etiam, ac sub incudem saepius revocent; **51** consulantque interim vel minus eruditos, et tenuiorum (ut ita dixerim) viriculas non aspernentur, **52** quando ita ferme comparatum est, ut in alienis erratis lyncei simus, in nostris lippi caecique, **53** ac non videamus, ut Catullus ait, “Manticae quod in tergo est.” **54** Sed in primis caveant hoc tamen, qui scribunt, nedum nimis ad vota laudum properant, cruda adhuc in publicum sua studia propellant.

55 Illud in Theodoro mirari me fateor, quid ita scripserit in praefatione librorum de Animalibus Aristotelis, quibus unis praecipue commendatur, **56** adiutum sese a nullo, nec certare adeo cum ceteris interpretibus, quos, inquit, vincere nullum negotium est, **57** cum libros eosdem sic Georgius Trapezuntius ante ipsum luculente verterit, **58** ut vel redditis quae apud veteres invenerat, vel per se denuo fictis excogitatisque vocabulis, Latiam prorsus indolem referentibus, **59** vitio factum nostro primus, opinor, iuniorum docuerit, cur ipsi minus multas quam Graeci rerum appellationes habeamus. **60** Hos igitur si quis libros diligenter legerit, minus profecto Gazam laudabit, paene illius vestigiis insistentem. **61** Quin si homo erit ingenuus, credo, stomachabitur sic a Theodoro dissimulatum, per quem maxime profecerat, **62** sic habitum paene contemptui ludibrioque, cuius potissimum laboribus insidiabatur. **63** Nobis vero etiam fortasse habebit gratiam, quod ista reddere suis auctoritatibus contendamus. **64** Nam quantum sibi Georgius in eo placuerit opere, vel illa de praefatione verba significant, **65** quibus sese libros eos Latinis ait non minus elegantis emendatosque dare, quam apud Graecos habeantur. **66** Sed et hoc ad se trahere Theodorus conatur, ut item quae de mensibus Graece prodidit, ex huius potissimum, de qua loquimur, interpretationis prohoemio subleguntur.

67 At enim fuere (sicut apparet) cerbissimae inter hos Graecos inimicitiae, sicut in grammatico quoque suo commentario Theodorus Georgium vocet hunc Pornoboscon, **68** quod alentem scorta significat, alludens, arbitror, ad Georgium veterem grammaticum, cui cognomentum Graeci Choeroboscon dixere.

69 Cetera porro, quae Theodorus hic edidit, ubi modo non repetundarum sit accusandus, sicut eruditione diligentiaque non carent, ita sunt, ut mihi quidem videtur, ad examen quoddam strictius curiosiusque revocanda.

70 Nos hoc loco nec doctorum nitida nomina temptamus apud imperitorum decolorare iudicia, 71 nec tamen dissimulare quid in quoque desideremus aut inhonoratum transire volumus, cui veritas patrocinetur. 72 Ut autem habere stilum quam maxime ingenuum paratumque volumus, ita quam minime accusatorium, quam minime licentiosum et noxium. 73 Nec enim tam vafritiam profitemur quam exhibemus industriam.

74 Quid autem nos olim de doctrina aestimaverimus ingenioque Theodori, Graecis aliquot et Latinis epigrammatis testati sumus, 75 quorum nunc unum dumtaxat, idque Graecum subiciemus, *siquis tamen haec quoque, siquis captus amore leget*. 76 Igitur sic est:

Κεῖτο μέγας ποτ' ἀγὼν Γαζῆ Θεοδώροιο ἄμφι
 Μούσαις τ' Αὐσονίαις ἢ δ' Ἐλικωνιάσι.
 Ταῖς μὲν γὰρ γενεὴν, ταῖς δ' αὖ θρεπτήρι' ὄφελεν·
 Ἑλλὰς γὰρ τέκε, τὸν γ' Αὐσονίη δ' ἔτραφεν.
 5 ἴσον δ' ἀμφοτέρων σοφίη γλώττη τ' ἐκέκαστο.
 τὸν δ' οὐτ' αὐτὸς ζῶν, οὐτ' ἄρ' ἔκρινε θανῶν·
 ἄλλὰ καὶ Ἰταλίας μεγάλῃ ἐπὶ Ἑλλάδι κεῖσθαι
 εἶλετο, ὄφρα κλέος ξυνὸν ἦ ἀμφοτέρῃς.

CHAPTER 90

WHAT A GREAT MAN THEODORE GAZA WAS!³³
AND, NONETHELESS, HOW MUCH HE BLUNDERED
IN TRANSLATING A PROBLEM OF ARISTOTLE

I do not shy away from having anything I write undergo scrutiny or risk challenge, provided that the bill of particulars be free of the two literary diseases which I most distrust, ignorance and envy, 2 and provided that I do not get a judge who is—to use Symmachus' phrase³⁴—more than a little unsympathetic to the Muses or an ignoramus or obstinate and insolent and has sworn obedience to a man rather than given his fealty to truth. 3 But if in fact several judges are to be named, I want these works of mine to be read not by the people of Taranto, Cosenza, and Sicily, as Lucilius wanted for certain number of his writings,³⁵ but by Latin men not ignorant of Greek literature; I want my works read not by Junius Congius,³⁶ 4 but by Scipio, by “the most learned of all” Persius,³⁷ and by Rutilius, that is to say, if there are any men alive comparable to them, marked by prudence, talent, and learning, and to whose judgment the case should rightly be presented in detail.

5 Such a judge, to give an example, if I may, is the man who has provided me with so many tools for my studies as well as the most ample leisure, Lorenzo de' Medici, formidable in his ancestors and forefathers and the pillar of the Florentine Republic. 6 Some of the greatest cities and princes have experienced that extraordinarily circumspect judgment of his and certain loftiness of mind in handling affairs, just as they have experienced

³³ Cf. Cicero *De div.* 1.52: “Xenophon Socraticus (qui vir et quantus!).”

³⁴ Symmachus, *Epistulae*, Bk. 1, ep. 14 (ἀμουσότροπος), ed. Otto Seeck, MGH 6 (1883), 10.4; ed. Jean Callu, Edition “Les Belles Lettres,” (Paris, 1972), 1:78, sect. 2.4–5.

³⁵ Cf. Cicero *De fin.* 1:7: “Nec vero, ut noster Lucilius, recusabo quo minus omnes mea legant. Utinam esset ille Persius! Scipio vero et Rutilius multo etiam magis; quorum ille iudicium reformidans Tarentinis ait se et Consentinis et Siculis scribere.”

³⁶ Pliny *N. H.* praef. 7, quoting Lucilius, *Saturae* (Bk. 26?): “nec doctissimis Manium Persiumve haec legere, Iunium Congum volo,” which E. H. Warmington, *Remains of Old Latin*, 4 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 1935–40), 3.200, frag. 643–4 (= ed. Marx frag. 595) emends to: “<ab indoctissimis> nec doctissimis <legi me>; Man<ium Manil>Persiumve haec legere, Iunium Congum volo.” Note that Poliziano has “Congius” rather than “Congus.” See Pauly-Wissowa, 10:1031–33, no. 68, “M. Iunius Congus Gracchanus.”

³⁷ Cicero *De oratore* 2.25: “Nam ut C. Lucilius, homo doctus et perurbanus, dicere solebat ea quae scriberet neque se ab indoctissimis neque a doctissimi legi velle, quod alteri nihil intellegerent, alteri plus fortasse quam ipse; de quo etiam scripsit: ‘Persium non curo legere,’—hic fuit enim, ut noramus, omnium fere nostrorum hominum doctissimus.”

that same judgment of his in the humanities and philosophy. 7 Therefore, those who do not stand in awe of him have not, as have the latter, observed him at close quarters and seen his inner dimension.

8 Such a judge also is my own Giovanni Pico, scion of the princes of Mirandola.³⁸ He is Nature's absolutely perfect product, from whom, I believe, philosophy—now that it is planning to speak in Latin—will receive its crowning glory.

9 Such judges, moreover, are those Venetians patricians Ermolao Barbaro and Girolamo Donà, two in number but joined together by the bond of love.³⁹ 10 Barbaro is a most fierce opponent of barbarism. He so hones by dint of a most assiduous attention to language⁴⁰ the weapons, as it were, of Latin philosophy, that is to say, its instrument, words, and so hammers out its vocabulary on a new anvil⁴¹ 11 that through his industry we today in fact almost live on a par with the Greeks as far as the elegance and richness of our language in the genre of philosophy is concerned. 12 And then there is Girolamo Donà. I do not know if there is any man more dignified, more learned, or even more humane. He unquestionably abounds with every grace and style. 13 I am afraid, however, his evaluation may strike some as of less weight on the grounds that he has heaped high praise upon me both in a very beautiful poem and in a letter.⁴² 14 For although it is indecent for me to believe such complimentary things about myself, given that I am far from tolerable as a person, let alone perfect, it is nonetheless more indecent not to believe such an outstanding man when he affirms quite sincerely, it would seem, these things about me. 15 Therefore, I have only one thing to say to those critics, who are in fact few in number, or others of their ilk, if there are any others: while they have laughed at these works of mine, such as they are, I utterly make light all this time now of phantoms and the shadows of hobgoblins,⁴³ “the nature of which is said to be”—to use the words of a sainted author—“to scare little children and to prattle in dark corners.”⁴⁴

³⁸ See p. 245 of the article above.

³⁹ See *ibid.*, pp. 245 and 248 for Barbaro and Donà respectively.

⁴⁰ Cf. Lucretius 6.119–20: “aridus unde auris terget sonus ille diuque/ducitur.”

⁴¹ Cf. Horace *Carmina* 1:35.38–39: “o utinam nova/incude diffingas. . . .”

⁴² See his letter 8 June 1488 to Poliziano in Poliziano, *Opera omnia*, 1:25, which ends with lines 33–35 from Theocritus' *Idyll IX*, save that the word Πωλιτιανοῦ is added after Μῶσαι (in modern editions: Μοῖσαι) on line 35 so that the verses read (I adapt A. S. F. Gow's translation of Theocritus, *The Greek Bucolic Poets* [Cambridge, 1953]): “/33/ [Of Muse and minstrelsy] be all my house filled. For not more sweet is sleep, /34/ or spring's sudden coming [ἐξαπίνας Gow; δὴ ἀπίνας opera omnia Poliz.] or to the bees /35/ flowers; so dear to me are the Muses of Poliziano.”

⁴³ Cf. Servius in *Aen.* 6:152: “umbras larvas vocamus.”

⁴⁴ Jerome *Hebr. Quaest. in Gen., praef.*, 3 (ed. Paul A. de Lagarde in CCSL 72 [Turnholt,

16 Theodore Gaza then, a Greek and a most erudite one, as even the learned would agree, has translated Aristotle's *Problems* into Latin. 17 But if I am not mistaken, the problem [= *Probl.* 30.1] where it is asked why do we observe that those who excel by their talent as philosophers or politicians or poets or artists have all been melancholics, and some so much so that they were even infected by the diseases of black bile, 18 certainly contains a translator's error too blatant and too significant for us now to excuse or pass over. 19 For in this passage when Aristotle cites as examples the heroes who are said to have suffered from black bile, he primarily discusses Hercules and concludes that he undoubtedly had this condition. 20 The indications and proofs he provides are that epilepsy is called the sacred malady because of Hercules and that in a senseless rage Hercules killed his children, as Seneca describes in his tragedy, and that before he died, he was suffering from an outbreak of suppurating ulcers. 21 Here we have, I think, the source of the tale of the "Nessean coat." 22 For this too is a disease of black bile. Hence, Aristotle says, this kind of ulcers also burst forth on Lysander the Spartan just before he died.

23 This is the way Gaza translated the passage as far as the children and ulcers of Hercules are concerned. His translation, then, runs as follows. "The motion of the mind of boys shows the same thing as does the eruption of ulcers, which for some time preceded death" 24 since the Greek text runs: "καὶ ἡ περὶ τοὺς παῖδας ἔκστασις καὶ ἡ πρὸ τῆς ἀφανίσεως αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ ἑλκῶν ἔκφουσις γενομένη." 25 I have no doubt, however, before I myself translate the passage, that it would be useful to weigh carefully what "ἐν τῇ" [= "in the" with something understood after the article] is supposed to mean, which he, Gaza, passed over in silence. In other words, what sense can be teased out of the preposition and that isolated article? 26 Actually, I think the word should be corrected to read "ἐν Οἴτῃ" so that the literal sense of the passage would be: "And his terror when faced with his children" or, if you will, "his derangement⁴⁵ when faced with his children and, prior to his death on Oeta, his outbreak of ulcers." 27 Moreover, for the Greek word *ectasis* we prefer the translation "terror" [*pavor*] or "derangement" [*excessus mentis*] over Gaza's "motion of the mind" [*motio mentis*].

1959]: 2.15–17). Isidore *Etymol.* 8:11.101, repeats the whole sentence without mentioning Jerome. The passage in Isidore is interesting since it also gives the etymology not only of *larva* but also of *lamia* in the next sentence. Poliziano's gave the title *Lamia* to the opening lecture on 1 Nov. 1492 of his course on Aristotle's *Prior Analytics* (edited by Ari Wesseling [Leiden, 1986]). Poliziano does not cite this passage of Isidore in the *Lamia*; nor does Wesseling in his commentary.

⁴⁵ *excessus mentis*: cf. (Vulg.) 4 *Esdr.* 5:34, 10:28, 12:3, 13:30; *Ps.* 30:23, 67:28; *Act.* 11:5.

28 In the case of the former we are following the interpreter of the Psalms, whom Hilary of Poitiers endorses;⁴⁶ in the case of the latter, we are following Jerome,⁴⁷ who, however, elsewhere rendered the Greek word *ectasis* by the single Latin word *excessus*.⁴⁸ 29 For Cicero defines terror as a fear that moves the mind from its mooring.⁴⁹ But let us postpone discussion of this word to another time and turn now to the issue at hand.

30 Aristotle offers examples to make his point clear. He shows that Hercules too was vexed by black bile, just as was then Ajax, Bellerophon, and the others. 31 Hence common sense, good order, and reason, in addition to the irrepressible truth that cannot be defeated,⁵⁰ support our interpretation. 32 For why does Theodore here, in the middle of a discussion of heroes, talk about boys whose minds have been moved? Also, what age of life is more removed from this black bile that we call frenzy than boyhood? 33 Furthermore, why does he understand this outbreak of ulcers before death to be something general when this is not what Aristotle's words signify and when this interpretation is clearly contrary to Aristotle's intent and will? 34 For he is trying to prove from specific arguments and examples that not boys, not just anybody, but heroes and the most outstanding men are disturbed by black bile. 35 In point of fact, if you think about it more seriously, the malady can even be called the sacred disease, as Aristotle says, or even the Herculean disease, which Theodore added on his own.

36 And the same passage was badly translated by Pietro d'Abano, who has the epithet "Conciliator" from his work of that name. He was a great authority in physics and medicine, 37 but unskilled in Latin and Greek. To tell the truth, because of the times in which he lived, I cannot get as indignant about his mistranslation. 38 By the evidence he himself provided, however, in a certain commentary he composed on these very same *Problems*, he betrayed himself as quite confused. 39 For he places himself in such difficulties that he cannot explain anything; and he is forced to

⁴⁶ Hilar. Pictav. *Tractus super Psalmos*, in (Itala) 67:27: "Beniamin iunior in pavore" (ed. Anton Zingerle, in *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* 22 [Vienna, 1891]: 302.20–21; ed. Jean Doignon, in CCSL 61 [Turnholt, 1997]: 283.2). Augustine relied on a different version of the Psalms which tended to transliterate the Greek, but Poliziano did not cite him; see August. *Ennarationes in Psalmos*, in Ps. 30:23 "Ego dixi in ecstasi mea" (CCSL, 38 [Turnholt, 1990]:219.1 and 220.16), in 67:28 "Beniamin adolescentior in ecstasi" (CCSL, 39 [*ibid.*]: 894.20–21), in 115:3 "dixi in ecstasi mea" (CCSL, 40 [Turnholt, 1956]: 1654.1, 7–8).

⁴⁷ See note 13 above. However, in his version *iuxta Hebraicum* Jerome translated Ps. 30:23 as "in stupore meo"; Ps. 67:28 as "in purpura sua"; and Ps. 115:11 as "in stupore meo."

⁴⁸ See (Vulg.) Ps. 115:2: "in excessu meo."

⁴⁹ *Tusc.* 4:19: "pavorem metum mentem loco moventem."

⁵⁰ Cf. Ovid *Epist.* 2:9.45: "vinci nescius."

say that “the stupor or,” as he puts it, “the freezing up that strikes boys gets its name from him,” i.e., I think, from Hercules. **40** This one point then [that the stupor gets its name from Hercules] I would concede him since any expression whatsoever of this metonymy will refer back to the same name.

41 But for this very reason anyone can now easily recognize that Theodore’s side of the argument has been repulsed, laid low, and blocked, even if we were to make no further comment. **42** Indeed, I myself believe that if Gaza were to come to life again and was admonished about his translation, he would not in any way defend it as correct—if he is one who defers rather more to truth than to bias. **43** As commonly happens in the game of twelve dice,⁵¹ once he came to regret his first throw,⁵² he would have asked to be allowed to take back the die.⁵³

44 Nor, moreover, would we be noting these things about him if we did not think highly of him? **45** For we are not about to use our leisure so foolishly as to seek to waste it and lose our dignity against the all too stale trifles of a johnny-come-lately **46** and against what I am tempted to call the miserable and shameful arguments of the babblers. I do not know whether I should repel these babblers with laughter or pass over them in silence so that they might fade away amid their absurdities as eternal nobodies. **47** We have only put forward this criticism, however, not in order to make what is called a splash, but rather for the sake of reminding scholars undertaking this exceptionally laborious and to the same degree envy-provoking burden of writing **48** that they should never in any way retreat from their goal or relax their industriousness and hard work or become self-indulgent or give up in the face of the burden. **49** Let them study details from every angle, weigh them, ponder them, and examine them. **50** Let them not let anything pass uninvestigated, untested, unexamined, and uncriticized over and over again and not put through frequent revisions. **51** And once in a while let them consult even those less learned and let them not spurn the modest strength, as I would put it, of their punier colleagues, **52** since it is rather well established that we have the sharp vision of a lynx when catching the errors of others while being bleary-eyed and blind when it comes to our own

⁵¹ *Scrupis editio 1553: scriptis editio 1489: recte in Cicerone scriptis.*

⁵² *moti editiones 1489 et 1553: recte in Cicerone dati.*

⁵³ Cf. Cic. *Horten.* Frag. 32, ed. Grilli (51 ed. Baiter-Kayser; 60 ed. Müller) apud Non. Marcellum 170.28 (250.3–251.24 ed. Lindsay): tibi concedo, quod in XII scriptis solemus, ut calculum reducas, si te alicuius dati paenitet.

errors 53 and not seeing, as Catullus says,⁵⁴ “the bag on our own back.” 54 But most of all, however, let authors beware lest in their eagerness to garner praise, they publish their research while it is still in a rough state.

55 I admit that one thing that surprises me about Theodore is what he wrote in the preface to his translation of the books of Aristotle’s *On the Animals*, the translation of the individual books of which earned him the highest praise.⁵⁵ 56 Theodore says in the preface that he received help from no one and that he was not even in competition with the other translators, whom, he says, it takes nothing to best. 57 But George of Trebizond produced a splendid translation of these very same books before he did. 58 Consequently, despite his own borrowing of words that he found among ancient authors and despite his own thinking up and coining of neologisms that in fact carried the stamp of Latinity, 59 he is the first modern, I think, to have taught that we Latins suffer from the defect of having many fewer terms for things than do the Greeks.⁵⁶ 60 Therefore, if someone carefully reads these books, he certainly will not praise Gaza since Gaza closely follows in the traces of his predecessor. 61 Indeed, if George is a man of a noble character, he will become indignant, I believe, at being deliberately ignored in this way by Theodore when Theodore has profited enormously from him. 62 He will become indignant at being held up to contempt and ridicule by Theodore when Theodore is appropriating his labors hand over fist. 63 George will, however, perhaps even be grateful to us for trying to return these things to him as their rightful owner. 64 For how much satisfaction George himself took in his accomplishment he tells us in his own words in the preface to his translation, 65 where he says that he would give these books to the Latins in a form no less elegant and correct than they are found among the Greeks.⁵⁷ 66 But even this statement

⁵⁴ Cat. 22.21.

⁵⁵ The Aristotelian corpus *de animalibus* translated by Gaza consisted of the *Historia animalium*, *De partibus animalium*, and the *De generatione animalium*.

⁵⁶ See Gaza’s preface to Pope Sixtus IV for his translation of the *De animalibus* (*editio princeps*, Venice, 1476, ed. Ludovicus Podocatharus, sign. a4v–5r): “Sed enim sufficit lingua Latina singulis Grece orationis sive vocabulis sive sententiis, quanquam nonnulli que Latine exprimere nequeunt, hec inopie lingue tribuunt Latine suamque pauperiem vitio dare lingue locupletissime audent. Quos satis convinci a M. Tullio puto cum ille linguam Romanam ne copia quidem verborum a Greca superari autemet. Exclamat ille aliquantulum quidem importune: ‘O inopem interdum linguam Grecam [cf. *De Fin.* 1.10: ‘Latinam linguam non modo non inopem, ut vulgo putarent, sed locupletiozem etiam esse quam Graecam’]!’ Sed non sine causa quando non nulli ita contendunt ut Grecis nihil deesse, Latinis permulta desiderari pronunciant.”

⁵⁷ George of Trebizond, *Collectanea Trapezuntiana*, ed. John Monfasani (Binghamton, NY, 1984), p. 299 § 4.

Theodore tries to appropriate for himself, just as was the case with what he published in Greek concerning the Greek months.⁵⁸ You very forcibly realize this from a passage further on in George's preface to the translation we are discussing.⁵⁹

67 But there obviously was, to be sure, a tremendously sharp hatred between these two Greeks, so much so that in his *Grammar* Theodore calls George "this Pornoboscus," 68 which means "brothel keeper," making a playful allusion, I think, to the ancient grammarian George, to whom the Greeks gave the sobriquet "Choiroboscus" ["pig herder"].⁶⁰

69 Furthermore, the other things this Theodore has published, to the degree that they reflect erudition and scholarly diligence, should be recalled, it seems to me, and put to a stricter and more detailed examination, though for now he should not be accused of plagiarism.

70 As for ourselves, we are not trying to tarnish here the glittering reputation of the learned in the eyes of the ignorant 71 or at the same time to hide what we find lacking in each person. Nor do we wish to pass over unhonored him whom truth has taken under her protection. 72 Moreover, just as we want to have a style that is as noble and cultivated as possible, so too we want it to be as minimally accusatory, licentious, and hurtful as possible. 73 For we are not professing cunning so much as we are demonstrating our industry.

74 On the other hand, what we once thought of the learning and talent of Theodore we testified to in some Greek and Latin epitaphs, 75 just one of which now—and a Greek one at that—we shall quote below, provided, however, that there is "someone who will also read these things and provided that this someone is a prisoner of love."⁶¹ 76 The inscription runs as follows:⁶²

⁵⁸ For Gaza's treatise *De mensibus*, which was directed against George Gemistus Pletho, see Milton Anastos, "Pletho's Calendar and Liturgy," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 4 (1948), 188–305, on 189–90, 228, 230–31, 233, 251.

⁵⁹ *Collectanea Trapezuntiana*, p. 269 §§ 6–7.

⁶⁰ See p. 250 above.

⁶¹ Virg. *Ecl.* 6:9–10.

⁶² In his collection of *epigrammata* this poem has the rubric: "21 aetatis anno. Εἰς Θεόδωρον τὸν Γαζῆ." Pontani, p. 72, gives the following Italian translation: "A 21 anni. A Teodoro Gaza. // Un tempo vi fu per Teodoro Gaza una grande contesa fra le Muse d'Ausonia e d'Eliconia. Egli doveva alle une la stirpe, alle altre il vitto: infatti fu la Grecia a generarlo, ma l'Ausonia a nutrirlo. Conosceva ugualmente scienza e lingua d'ambidue. Quella contesa né vivo né morto egli volle dirimere; ma decise d'esser sepolto in Italia, in Magna Grecia, perché la gloria fosse comune a entrambe."

There was once a great competition between the Muses of Ausonia and the Muses of Heliconia for Theodore Gaza. He owed to one his birth, to the other his nurture. In effect, Greece gave birth to him, but Ausonia nurtured him. He excelled in the learning and language of both of them in equal measure. Neither while alive nor in death did he decide the competition, but he chose to be buried in Italy, in *Magna Graecia*, so that both would share the glory.

REINTERPRETING RENAISSANCE HUMANISM: MARCELLO
ADRIANI AND THE RECOVERY OF LUCRETIUS

Alison Brown

The question of the impact of ancient texts on Renaissance humanists remains intractable. The nineteenth-century view that devotion to antiquity was “measureless” in the fifteenth century has given way to a more cautious attempt to evaluate its influence by provable citations from known texts. Kristeller’s discussion of “Paganism and Christianity” in 1953 sums up the attitude of most scholars even today, that there were “probably few real atheists” and fewer pantheists in the Renaissance, the main threat to religious orthodoxy being the steady growth of non-religious intellectual interests that competed with religion for attention.¹ The virtual impossibility of knowing what individuals believe has led one scholar recently to redefine the problem as one of distinguishing orthodoxy not from paganism but from heterodoxy, between which the boundary was much more porous and fluctuating.² We know, of course, what the Church defined as heresy, which in the fifteenth century included charges against a grammar teacher in Borgo San Sepolcro for teaching pagan authors like Seneca, Ovid and Lucan in 1404 and charges against Giovanni Pico della Mirandola’s nine hundred *Conclusiones* in 1487 and his *Heptaplus* in 1489.³ The fact that the

¹ Paul O. Kristeller, “Paganism and Christianity” in idem, *Renaissance Thought: the Classic, Scholastic and Humanist Strains* (Cambridge, MA, 1955; repr. New York, 1961), pp. 71–72, reiterated recently by John Monfasani, “Platonic Paganism in the Fifteenth Century,” in *Reconsidering the Renaissance*, ed. Mario A. di Cesare (Binghamton, 1992), p. 46. Cf. Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy*, trans. S.G.C. Middlemore (London, 1950), p. 121.

² Christopher Celenza, “Pythagoras in the Renaissance: The Case of Marsilio Ficino,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 52 (1999), 668–669 n. 6; idem, “Late Antiquity and Florentine Platonism: the ‘Post-Plotinian’ Ficino,” in *Marsilio Ficino: His Theology, His Philosophy, His Legacy*, eds. Michael J.B. Allen and Valery Rees (Leiden, 2002), pp. 72–73; cf. Allen’s introduction, *ibid.*, pp. xx–xxi.

³ Cited by James R. Banker, *The Culture of San Sepolcro During the Youth of Piero della Francesca* (Ann Arbor, MI, 2003), pp. 71–76 (with thanks to Donal Cooper for the reference); on Pico’s heresy, see Albano Biondi, “La doppia inchiesta sulle *Conclusiones* e le traversie romane di Pico nel 1487,” in *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola*, ed. Gian Carlo Garfagnini (Florence, 1997), pp. 197–212; Stephen A. Farmer, ed., *Syncretism in the West:*

Church remained troubled by the danger of ancient pagan texts—despite the synthesis achieved by Thomism in the late medieval period and by Renaissance syncretism (such as Pico's) stressing the compatibility of ancient and Christian philosophies—suggests that they may have presented a more real danger to orthodoxy than we have been led to believe.

This explains my topic and the approach I shall adopt in exploring—as a “proowler who works in the margins” (in De Certeau's imaginative phrase)—one vulnerable area on the boundary between orthodoxy and heterodoxy.⁴ This is where the new wave of pagan authors struck home in the fifteenth century, among them two books by authors who are of particular interest to me, Lucretius's *De rerum natura* in 1417 (of which there are fifty or so extant manuscripts, nine in the Laurentian library in Florence alone, with four printed editions between 1473 and 1500) and Diogenes Laertius's *Lives of eminent philosophers* translated for Cosimo de' Medici by 1433 (of which forty-eight manuscripts are extant, with seven printed editions in Latin and six in Italian between 1472 and 1497).⁵ Since they were dangerous in directly challenging the Judaic-Christian theory of the universe—Lucretius being forbidden as “reading in our schools” by the Florentine synod in 1517 because it was “a lascivious and wicked work, in which every effort is used to demonstrate the mortality of the soul”⁶—their influence is often hidden, encouraging the recently-expressed view that the Renaissance poets who read and quoted Lucretius in the fifteenth century manipulated or

Pico's 900 *Theses* (1486) (Tempe, AZ, 1998), pp. 15–16; on the *Heptaplus de septiformi sex dierum Geneseos enarratione* (Florence, B. de' Libri, c. 1490, trans. Jessie B. McGaw, New York, 1977), see Charles Trinkaus, “Heptaplus di Pico della Mirandola,” in *Giovanni Pico*, ed. Garfagnini, pp. 105–25.

⁴ Michel De Certeau, *The Writing of History* (1975), trans. Tom Conley (New York, 1988), p. 79; cf. idem, *Heterologies, Discourse on the Other*, trans. Brian Massumi (Manchester, 1986); and *The Mystic Fable*, I, (1982), trans. Michael B. Smith (Chicago, 1992). See also Celenza, “Pythagoras in the Renaissance,” n. 2 above, and on “different antiquities,” *ibid.*, p. 669.

⁵ Michael D. Reeve, “The Italian Tradition of Lucretius,” *Italia medioevale e umanistica* 23 (1980), 27–46; Wolfgang B. Fleischmann, “Lucretius and English Literature,” in *Catalogus translationum et commentariorum*, eds. Paul O. Kristeller and F. Edward Cranz, 2 (Washington, D.C., 1971), pp. 349–65; Agostino Sottili, “Il Laerzio latino e greco e altri autografi di Ambrogio Traversari,” in *Vestigia. Studi in onore di Giuseppe Billanovich*, eds. Rino Avesani et al., 2 (Rome, 1984), pp. 704–07 and n. 21; Maria R. Pagnoni, “Prime note sulla tradizione medioevale ed umanistica di Epicuro,” *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*, 3rd ser., 4/4 (1974), 1459 n. 74.

⁶ Fleischmann, *Catalogus translationum*, p. 352; Maria Fubini Leuzzi, “Note sulle costituzioni sinodali fiorentine del 1517,” in *I ceti dirigenti in Firenze dal gonfalonierato di giustizia a vita all'avvento del ducato*, ed. Elisabetta Insabato (Lecce, 1999), pp. 184–86.

subverted his argument, recalling and then rejecting his Epicureanism in order “to reinforce their own Christian positions.”⁷ But this underestimates the importance of these texts in introducing new ideas that helped to undermine the established hegemony. For even if we cannot speak about individual belief, careful re-reading of the evidence shows how these texts helped to change the boundary markers. One humanist, Marcello Adriani, quoted Lucretius not to subvert him but to use his argument to subvert the superstitious morality of the fifteenth-century church, which he said was more alien than the morality of the ancients. This surprising reversal of the definition of otherness suggests Adriani may provide us with a key to understanding the wider “transvaluation of values” that Renaissance humanism helped to bring about.⁸

Although Diogenes Laertius’s *Lives* were not unknown in the Middle Ages, it was the Latin translation made by Ambrogio Traversari for Cosimo de’ Medici that popularised the text in the fifteenth century. Its novelty was its rich selection of early Greek philosophers—such as Pythagoras, Empedocles, the sceptic Pyrrho and the atomists Democritus and Epicurus, who were relatively unfamiliar and wholly unorthodox. For this reason Traversari, as a Camaldulensian monk, felt diffident about undertaking the translation of this text. For although pagan philosophers shared many views about the world with Christians—he wrote—their fatal limitation was their failure to grasp a truth that Christian “infants and children, boys and girls of every age and every sex” understood and felt with great clarity, that is, “the immortality of the soul through the indulgence of divine grace.”⁹ Although he could have defended the translation with the same argument used by the grammar-teacher in Borgo San Sepolcro, that the ancients lived in a different culture and offered no threat to Christians, he instead went to the heart of the difference that

⁷ Charlotte P. Goddard, “Epicureanism and the Poetry of Lucretius in the Renaissance,” Doctoral dissertation, Cambridge University, 1991, p. 3, listing Bonincontri, Pontano, Marullo, Scipione Capece and Paleario; cf. Jill Kraye, “Moral Philosophy,” in *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, eds. Charles Schmitt, Quentin Skinner and Eckhard Kessler (Cambridge, 1988), p. 377; see my article cited in n. 16 below, which provides the basis for the argument that follows.

⁸ Edgar Wind, writing to criticise the danger of overemphasising the continuity of medieval modes of thought in the Renaissance in *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance* (London, 1967, first published in 1958).

⁹ Ambrogio Traversari to Niccolò Leonardi, a Venetian doctor, in 1430, cited by Marcello Gigante, “Ambrogio Traversari interprete di Diogene Laerzio,” in *A.T. nel VI centenario della nascita*, ed. Gian Carlo Garfagnini (Florence, 1988), pp. 398–404 at 403.

divided Christians from the ancients, “who lived before Christianity and didn’t worship God in the right way.”¹⁰

Until the new wave of pagan authors was recovered in the fifteenth century, it had been Aristotle’s writings that posed the greatest challenge to the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, especially the “secular Aristotelianism” or Averroism taught in Padua.¹¹ Although this aspect of Aristotle seems to have exercised less influence in Florence, where interest centred more on his political writings, the question of the soul and divine grace was much debated in Medici circles in the 1470s and 1480s: “where does [the soul] enter [the body] and where does it leave?” Benedetto Dei and his friend Luigi Pulci asked in one poem, and, after hosting in his palace the continuation of a theological debate on original sin, Lorenzo de’ Medici wrote a poem on “the vicious circle,” in which he asked to be told, “which comes first, the gift of God’s grace or the right disposition to receive it?”¹² This was the milieu in which the humanist chancellor of Florence, Bartolomeo Scala, had a few years earlier discussed what he understood by immortality in a letter to Lorenzo de’ Medici, apparently responding to Lorenzo’s *Altercazione* or *On the highest good* with its concluding chapter based on Ficino’s *Oratio ad Deum theologica*.¹³ Like Lorenzo (paraphrasing Ficino), Scala dismissed the goods of Fortune—such as arms, wealth and politics—as unworthy of pursuit. But he departed from the *Altercazione*’s concluding praise of God, or “the highest, eternal Good,” as the sole source of happiness and immortality by claiming instead (controversially, he says in his letter) that it is the pursuit of letters that provides immortality, for letters:

¹⁰ Dante, *Inferno* 4, lines 37–38; Banker, *The Culture of San Sepolcro*, p. 75.

¹¹ The term is Kristeller’s, writing on Pomponazzi in idem, *Eight Philosophers of the Renaissance* (Stanford, 1964), p. 74.

¹² “Costor che fan sì gran disputazione/dell’anima, ond’ell’entri o ond’ell’esca,” now edited and attributed to Dei by Paolo Orvieto, “forse ricorrendo alla consulenza poetica del Pulci,” “A proposito del sonetto *Costor che fan sì gran disputazione* e dei sonetti responsivi,” *Interpres* 4 (1981–2), 400–1, 409; Lorenzo de’ Medici, *Canzoniere*, ed. Paolo Orvieto, *Tutte le opere*, 1 (Rome, 1992), pp. 158–60 at 160: “Qual prima sia vorrei mi fussi esposto, o tal grazia o la buona inclinazione”; on its context, Cesare Vasoli, *Profezia e ragione* (Naples, 1974), pp. 17–21; Jill Kraye, “Lorenzo and the Philosophers,” in *Lorenzo the Magnificent: Culture and Politics*, eds. Michael Mallett and Nicholas Mann (London, 1996), pp. 151–66.

¹³ Lorenzo de’ Medici, *Tutte le opere*, ed. Orvieto, 2: 927–75; idem, *Selected Poems and Prose*, trans. Jon Thiem (University Park, PA, 1991), pp. 65–92. It is discussed by André Rochon, *La jeunesse de Laurent de Médicis (1449–1478)* (Paris, 1963), pp. 475–543; Mario Martelli, *Studi laurenziani* (Florence, 1965), pp. 1–35; Paul O. Kristeller, *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters* (Rome, 1969), pp. 214–17; Riccardo Fubini, ed., Lorenzo de’ Medici, *Lettere*, 1 (Florence, 1977), pp. 496–99, 510–11; and Orvieto in Lorenzo de’ Medici, *Tutte le opere*, 2: 915–26.

among all mortal things alone seem to me to be much more immortal than other pursuits in this life. For although everything we do eventually perishes and nothing lasts for long, yet we are accustomed to speak in this way, honouring whatever is longer-lasting with the name of immortality, which is peculiar to divine things.¹⁴

The immortality of letters was a commonplace of humanism, of course, and in alluding to it, Scala was also paying a compliment to his patron, Lorenzo de' Medici, and his recent return to literary writing. But in linking the immortality of letters with divinity Scala was also marking a shift in attitude that was reinforced by his later writing on the subject. The immortality of letters was the theme of two of his fables written in the late 1480s or early 1490s. In the first, *Litterae*, Immortality is forced to take refuge against Old Age in a book store protected by bronze outer walls and cedar wood inside, whereas in the second, *Immortalitas*, the immortality of a Christian soul seeking its final resting place is mocked by an Epicurean for the unhappiness of his plight.¹⁵

I have discussed elsewhere the impact on Scala of the newly-discovered and translated Epicurean texts, which I argue influenced his search for a universal law of nature based on the mutual self-interest shared by animals and men, as well as his evolutionary account of language and what we would now call his anthropological approach to religion, which he believed was common to all peoples, "however barbarous and savage."¹⁶ All these views conflicted with Christian orthodoxy, but Scala also saw that Epicurus's natural precepts or maxims shared the same morality as the New Testament, since the injunction "not harm another nor be harmed" was also one of Christ's precepts in his Sermon on the Mount.¹⁷ This link between Epicurean and Christian morality helps to

¹⁴ Bartolomeo Scala to Lorenzo de' Medici, [April-May 1474], *Humanistic and Political Writings*, ed. Alison Brown (Tempe, AZ, 1997), pp. 41–42, with thanks to David Marsh for his translation of this passage; Lorenzo, *L'altercazione*, in *Tutte le opere*, chap. 6, lines 45, 103 (pp. 969, 972): "quel che costringni a te venire, o Dio," "O sommo eterno Bene."

¹⁵ *Apologues*, II, 70 and 80 (cf. the earlier *Immortalitas* [I, 18] in Scala, *Humanistic and Political Writings*, ed. Brown, pp. 385, 387, 311) in *Renaissance Fables*, trans. David Marsh (Tempe, AZ, 2004), pp. 248–49, 254–55, 108–109: "librariam," correctly translated "book shop" by David Marsh, although the description suggests perhaps a chest or repository (*librarium*) may be intended.

¹⁶ "adeo barbarae immanesque," Bartolomeo Scala, *Apologia contra vituperatores civitatis Florentiae* (Florence, A. Miscomini, 1496), in idem, *Humanistic and Political Writings*, ed. Brown, p. 407; Alison Brown, "Lucretius and the Epicureans in the Social and Political Context of Renaissance Florence," *I Tatti Studies* 9 (2001), 11–62, especially 34–37.

¹⁷ Scala, *De legibus et iudiciis dialogus*, in idem, *Humanistic and Political Writings*, ed. Brown, p. 344, trans. David Marsh in *Cambridge Translations of Renaissance Philosophical*

explain Marcello Adriani's later claim that the morality of the ancients was less alien than the superstitious morality of contemporary Christianity. In order to understand this surprising reversal of values, we have to move on to the situation in Florence after 1494 when the religious and political consensus broke down.

Marcello Adriani succeeded Poliziano as professor of poetry and oratory in the Florentine University on his death in late September 1494, delivering "prolusions" to inaugurate the start of each university year. These lectures, which continued from 1494 until at least 1514 or later,¹⁸ provide a rich source of evidence about the novelty of his teaching and his robust defence of ancient philosophy against the assaults of Savonarola. Until the publication in 1998 of Peter Godman's *From Poliziano to Machiavelli*, Adriani had been a largely neglected figure, and, even now, Godman's wittily caustic account of Adriani's recipe for survival hardly paints him as a radical innovator, stressing instead his conservative return to the safe republican patriotism of Leonardo Bruni's era.¹⁹ Anthony Grafton's recent discussion of Adriani's empirical approach to natural history in his printed commentary on Dioscorides' *De materia medica* does more to explain his novelty as a humanist.²⁰ But, even so, it is difficult to understand why this university professor, shortly to become chancellor of Florence, came to challenge the Christian beliefs of the city's religious leader, Savonarola, at a time of great political and religious crisis. It is Armando Verde who provides an answer to this question in his study of Florence's university. There he describes how Adriani used his lectures to deliver "the most explicit formulation of a lay version of theology" in order to counter Savonarola's fundamentalism, "an extraordinary reassertion of humanist studies," Verde calls it, which according to Adriani had risen again from "that ancient and misshapen site beneath which they had almost putrefied" in order to give his students the chance of

Texts, ed. Jill Kraye 2 (Cambridge, 1997), p. 179; cf. Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae* (Rome, G. Lauer, 1472), fol. 138r (maxim 31 in the Loeb edition, trans. R.D. Hicks, 2 [Cambridge, MA, 1965], p. 673): "naturae ius utilitatis est signum, ut neque se invicem laedant neque laedantur"; cf. Matt.7:12; Brown, "Lucretius and the Epicureans," p. 35 and nn. 63 and 64.

¹⁸ Payments for his lectures from 1494 to 1503 are listed in Armando Verde, *Lo Studio Fiorentino 2* (Florence, 1973), pp. 476–77, 5 (Gli stanziamenti) (Florence, 1994), pp. 315–436 passim; payments from 1503 to 1514 are in Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Bigazzi MS 109 (libro 6), for the reference to which I am indebted to Jonathan Davies.

¹⁹ Peter Godman, *From Poliziano to Machiavelli: Florentine Humanism in the High Renaissance* (Princeton, 1998), pp. 158–59, 186–87, 190, 266–67; cf. p. 279 below.

²⁰ Anthony Grafton, *Bring Out Your Dead: The Past as Revelation* (Cambridge, MA, 2001), pp. 2–3, 5–10.

rediscovering them from “almost untouched treasure-chambers.”²¹ What none of these scholars have detected, however, is the dynamic presence of Lucretius and the early Greek atomists among these almost putrefied treasures, who provide the missing link between Adriani’s apparently “backward-looking” republicanism and his forward-looking interest in natural science and history. They also provided Adriani with the argument he needed to attack the superstitious and fearful religion preached by Savonarola.

Lucretius made his presence felt in Adriani’s opening proslusion in praise of poetry at the beginning of November 1494.²² Despite being rapidly prepared and opening with due tribute to his predecessors in his Chair and to the Medici family as “the only protectors of letters in this city,” it already reveals Adriani’s interest in natural philosophy—and especially in Lucretius, who is named several times, with a long quotation from *De rerum natura* comparing the softening effect of poetry on hard learning matter with the honey that doctors put on the rims of mugs to sweeten bitter medicine for children. Nevertheless, in these last hours of the Medici regime, Adriani was careful to voice his doubt about whether Lucretius should be praised “for his worthless heresy about atoms”—any more than Epicurus, who believed the gods were indifferent to our affairs. It was in the destabilised years following the French invasion of Italy and the fall of the Medici regime in Florence in 1494 that Epicurean emphasis on fortune and on primitivism became fashionable. Humanists in Naples as well as in Florence openly attributed these events to the power of Lucretian fortune, and in Florence Adriani directly compared the self-interested free-for-all that developed after 1494, during the early chaotic months of the new popular government, to Lucretius’s description of primitive life *ante legem*.²³ In response, Savonarola devoted much of his

²¹ Armando Verde, *Lo Studio Fiorentino*, 4/3 (Ricerche e documenti) (Florence, 1985), p. 1310: “la più esplicita formulazione della teologia in versione laica”; p. 1311: “Questa straordinaria ripresa degli studi di umanità, che risorgevano “ex antiquo illo et informi situ sub quo pene putruerant...quasi ex intactis tesaurois,” quoting the proslusion of 6 October 1497, Riccardiana MS. 811 [= R], fol. 18r. Unless otherwise stated, the translations are my own.

²² R, fols. 1r–5v at 3v: “unicum in hac urbe patrociniū litterarum”; summarised by Verde, *Lo Studio Fiorentino*, 4/3, pp. 1161–63; cf. Godman, *From Poliziano*, pp. 151–55.

²³ See Alison Brown, “Rethinking the Renaissance in the Aftermath of Italy’s Crisis,” in *Italy in the Age of the Renaissance*, ed. John Najemy (Oxford, 2004), pp. 246–50; eadem, “Lucretius and the Epicureans,” pp. 46–47, 50–51; and on the role of fortune, Mario Santoro, *Fortuna, ragione e prudenza nella civiltà letteraria del Cinquecento* (Naples, 1967), esp. pp. 11–21.

Lenten sermons the following spring to ridiculing ancient philosophers, especially the atomists, whom he encouraged the women in his audience to laugh at for believing that the world “was made with atoms, that is, with those tiniest of particles that fly through the air.”²⁴

Although Adriani ostensibly left ancient poetry aside for the next two years to devote himself to more uncontroversial subjects, in fact Lucretius remained a key text for him, providing his opening lecture at the beginning of the academic year 1496–97 with its imagery of storms and its description of the utilitarian origin of language when men first began to live together.²⁵ It was in his lecture at the beginning of next academic year 1497–98, however, that Adriani developed his important vindication of the study of pagan authors already referred to. Once again, his ostensible theme was the utility of studying the humanities, which was not immediately obvious, he said, in a town that reacted to everything by calculating the dividend that it would yield. The fathers and sons listening to him might have been even more surprised if they had realised that Lucretius would be one of the key authorities for his “lay version of theology.”²⁶ Its theme was the need to be mobile and adjustable in the face of the new situation by understanding the three “authors of events,” Fortune, Nature and God (in that order), and, by understanding them, lose all fear of them.²⁷ This theme signals the presence of Lucretius, although he is not mentioned by name, but even more Lucretian is Adriani’s account of the superstitious origins of religion, which provided him with the basis for his attack on Savonarola and on the propitiatory religion that was traditional in Florence.

According to Adriani, fear stems from ignorance of these three authors of events, as a result of which we project our fears as divinities that need placating. God should not be cultivated superstitiously because he enjoyed such a vast empire, nor should he be treated with impiety because he was so slow in exacting penalties, for he is not like us, *non esse eum similem nobis*. “We are very critical of the ancient Romans,” he went on, “who,

²⁴ Quoting Savonarola’s 3rd sermon on *Amos e Zaccaria*, 19 February 1496, ed. Paolo Ghiglieri, 1 (Rome, 1971), pp. 79–81; cf. Godman, *From Poliziano*, p. 140.

²⁵ R., fols. 12r, 14r–v, Brown, “Lucretius and the Epicureans,” p. 48 and n. 95.

²⁶ R, fols. 18r–26r (cf. Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana, MS 90 sup. 39 [= L], fols. 34r–45r); Verde, *Lo Studio Fiorentino*, 4/3, pp. 1309–18 (and n. 21 above); Godman, *From Poliziano*, pp. 162–67; Brown, “Lucretius and the Epicureans,” pp. 48–50.

²⁷ R, fols. 19v, 20r (cf. L, 36v, 37r): “Sed contemplatus necessariam esse hanc in animis nostris mobilitatem”/“omni tamen ope et studio annitendum est, ut quos habemus omnium eventuum tres auctores, Fortunam, Naturam et Deum, cognoscere discamus.”

without any provocation, were so fearful of the power of the Caesars that they built temples to them all over the world and made sacrifices in order to placate them, thinking that if they were propitiated, everything would go well for themselves”—and so powerfully does this fear play on our minds that the less cultivated Egyptians were impelled to honour vile animals in much the same way by adoring crocodiles and dogs, “thinking there was something divine” in them.²⁸ He did not approve of the saying on everyone’s lips today, that God was slow to punish in order to profit from the delay, as though he were a pawnbroker or a hawk of penalties who became all the richer the longer he waited for repayment²⁹—alluding here not only to the popular sermons of friars but also to contemporary jokes like the one recorded by Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti, in which thieves, sentenced to repay at the Last Judgement the cloak they had stolen from an Abbot, intrepidly reply: “Mister, since you’ve given us such a long time for repayment, we’ll take the rest of your goods”—and with that, took his mule, horses, clothes and bags as well.³⁰ But God is not like that, nor are we like him in repaying injustices, Adriani told his audience. God is more like a pharmacist than a pawnbroker, and just as the unqualified are not capable of dispensing medicine that only pharmacists know when and how much to give, so we are unqualified in the field of divine affairs, which are unknown to us. Nor is God to be feared, since “it is his nature to bestow benefits for nothing,” and if you do want to propitiate him, good behaviour is better than incense.³¹

²⁸ R, fol. 20r-v; cf. L. 37r-v: “Deumque non tam ob magnitudinem imperii superstitiose colere et ob tarditatem suppliciorum impie de eo aliquid cogitare quam dare operam ut intelligamus non esse eum similem nobis.”/“In quo maxime damnamus Romanos veteres qui Caesarum sine provocatione potentiam veriti, templa illis toto orbe constituerunt, sacrificiaque quibus eos placarent credentes si eos propitios habuissent omnia sibi secunda fore tantamque vim habet hic motus in animis nostris, ut hec eadem stolidiores Egyptios impulerit ad constituendos non dissimiles honores foedis animalibus adorandosque cocroditolos et canes, credentes inesse his animalibus divinum quiddam...”

²⁹ R, fol. 25r, L, 44v: “Non enim probamus illud quid in ore omnium est: lente irasci Deum ut tarditatem supplicii gravitate recompenset. Hii enim similem sibi Deum crediderunt feneratorum et institorum penarum, cui [L, qui R] quantum in penis exigendis [L, elig-R] temporis periret tantum pretia [L, presentia R] earum auferentur.”

³⁰ Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti, *Le Porretane*, Novella 7, ed. Bruno Basile (Rome, 1981), pp. 52–53.

³¹ R, fol. 25r-v, L, 44v–45r: “Sed non talis natura Deus quemadmodum, nec nos in iniuriis referendis illi similes [R, simi-, illi L]...Pena autem Deus utitur quasi pharmaco quodam, cuius oportunitatem ipse novit et mensuram, utque medicinae imperiti colligere nequeunt...sic profecto divina nobis incognita sunt...quemadmodum a superstitione docentes, potentiam Dei non esse timendam, natura enim illi est benefacere gratis beneficia

This was an amazing rebuff to Savonarola, who not only instilled great fear into the hearts of his followers—the bane of superstitious religion, according to Adriani—but who also claimed to be qualified to speak about divine affairs, which Adriani thought were unknowable. The fear aroused by Savonarola's sermons is well documented by the reaction of ser Niccolò Michelozzi's wife, who heard his famous Lent sermon in San Lorenzo in 1492 threatening that God's vengeance would come "Quickly, quickly, and speedily, speedily" (*Cito, cito e velociter e velociter*) and now believed "that any day now, indeed, at any hour, the heavens and the earth are going to collapse: she's so frightened, it's too much," ser Pace told Michelozzi, and urged him to write to his wife and comfort her as he best knew how to do.³² Savonarola's claim to be God's prophet is equally well documented and equally contentious: "He has made me say it and if He errs, I too err; but He cannot err, so neither do I in telling you what God says."³³ This must explain the vehemence of Adriani's 1497 lecture, which ended with him saying that his studies might seem useless to some "and to be spurned because ancient and regarded as alien to our religion and also because the high priests of the Christian religion taught more fully and certainly about all these things." Nevertheless, he went on, ancient writings did not lose their scent over time like perfume, and those who attacked them failed to realize what they lost by disowning them, since the ancients, far from being alien, were the best witnesses in defence of Christianity, for it happens that those who know and those who don't, as Aristotle says, say the same about the same things in the same way.³⁴

dare, quem si velis [L, volueris R] propitiare, bonus esto [L, est R], satis eum coluit quisquis [L, quisque R] imitatus est, quo enim iustior, sanctiorque eris eo minus thure indigebis."

³² ser Pace Bambello to Niccolò Michelozzi, 14 April 1492, Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale, Fondo Ginori Conti, 29, 84, fol. 99: "[Nannina Giovanni] va alla predica a San Lorenzo a frate Girolamo che tuata via dice che 'cito, cito e velociter e velociter el fragello di dio ne viene' e a llei pare che ogni dì, anzi ogni hora, e s'abbi a disfare el cielo e la terra, e sta in tanta paura che è troppo. Scrivetele e confortatela come sapete." Michelozzi, who had been Lorenzo de' Medici's secretary, was at the time Florentine mandatory in Naples. Nancy Isenberg, "Censimento delle lettere di N. Michelozzi," *Giornale italiano di filologia*, n.s. 13 (1982), 276–77.

³³ Savonarola, *Prediche sopra Ruth e Michea*, ed. Vincenzo Romano, 1 (Rome, 1962), p. 27 (8 May 1496): "e' me l'ha fatto dire Lui; e se Lui erra, erro ancora io. Ma Lui non può errare, adunque non erro ancora io a dirti quello che dice Dio," cited by Alison Brown, "Savonarola, Machiavelli and Moses: A Changing Model" in *Florence and Italy. Renaissance Studies in Honour of N. Rubinstein*, eds. Peter Denley and Caroline Elam (London, 1988), p. 61; repr. eadem, *The Medici in Florence. The Exercise and Language of Power* (Florence and Perth, 1992), p. 271.

³⁴ R, fols. 25v–26r, L, 45r, ed. in Verde, *Lo Studio Fiorentino*, 4/3, p. 1318, referring to Horace, *Epist.* I, 2, 69–70 (on perfume not losing its scent) and to Aristotle, *Post Anal.* 71A–B (with thanks to Jill Krayer for help with this reference).

By arguing that it was contemporary religion that was superstitious and less moral than the apparently “alien” morality of the ancient philosophers, Adriani reverses the orthodox view of Christianity as civilised and paganism as alien. The propitiatory, or *do ut des*, view of religion, according to which “I give to you in order that you give to me” was traditional in Florence, and in fact Savonarola had been attacked the previous year by one traditionalist Florentine for not understanding the gift relationship between Florence and God that gave Florence prosperity in exchange for the charity and lavish church-building given to God by the city.³⁵ But Adriani knew that Savonarola understood and played on this exchange relationship in promising the Florentines that they would become richer and more powerful if they accepted the reforms that he, as God’s mouthpiece, urged on them. What he did in response was to subvert the relationship by using Lucretius to describe its psychological origins. According to Lucretius, we create figures of power as a projection of our own fantasies, hoping to become as powerful as they are by propitiating them with prayers and “stocking our cities with altars.” But far from allaying our fears of the unknown, what we do instead is to place ourselves in their thrall: “Unhappy human race, to grant such feats/To Gods, and then to add vindictiveness!”³⁶ This, of course, was exactly the hold that Savonarola was exercising on the fearful Florentines by threatening God’s speedy vengeance on their sins, as Adriani well understood. His lectures show how cleverly he used Lucretius’s argument to attack the superstitious roots of Savonarola’s fundamentalism.

The death of Savonarola at the stake the following year again made it possible for Adriani to cite Lucretius by name—and so in Adriani’s opening lecture in 1498–99, on the realism of ancient poets in showing how the good and bad are mixed in life, we find Lucretius quoted for calling love both generative (as in the famous opening lines of *De rerum natura* in praise of Venus) and base, and for also believing, as a “follower of Epicurus,” that happiness consists in knowing the causes of things and in

³⁵ By Francesco Altoviti in his *Defensione contro all’ archa di Fra Girolamo* (Florence, Francesco di Dino, 1497?), ed. Gian Carlo Garfagnini, *Rinascimento* 31 (1991), 124–25; see Alison Brown, “Intellectual and Religious Currents in the Post-Savonarola Years,” in *The Figure of Girolamo Savonarola and His Influence in Spain and Europe*, eds. Julia Benevent and Donald Weinstein (Florence, 2005), pp. 3–6.

³⁶ Lucret. V, 1161–1240 at 1161–63, “et ararum compleverit urbis,” 1194–95, “O genus infelix humanum, talia divis/cum tribuit facta atque iras adiunxit acerbas!” (adopting here the translation of Anthony M. Esolen [Baltimore, 1995], pp. 191, 192).

“scorning religion” (citing the “famous” lines from Virgil), whereas other poets found happiness in obscene love.³⁷ There is, of course, a danger in exaggerating the influence of Lucretius at the expense of the welter of other ancient philosophers in Adriani’s canon. In the course of his lecturing career, Adriani’s repeated listing of these philosophers begins to read like a mantra to defend his own teaching in a city—as he so often said—that was more devoted to money than learning: against pain and grief, he was able to produce:

the school of the Stoics, the academy of Aristotle, the synthesis of Empedocles’ discord and friendship, the silence of Pythagoras, the *homoeomeria* of Anaxagoras, the pleasure and the garden of Epicurus and the atom of Democritus flung into empty space, the patched cloak of Diogenes and the Academy, through which Socrates taught mortals how to find the explanation of all divine and human affairs.³⁸

Not, perhaps, an enticing curriculum for today, but it does nevertheless encapsulate the themes that underlie Adriani’s almost continuous lectures on “Poetry and Oratory” on the Florentine campus throughout his career.

After the return of the elder branch of the Medici to Florence in 1512 and the elevation of Giovanni to the Papacy in 1513, Adriani laid more emphasis on Plato’s stable and hierarchical universe in his lectures, as even this summary listing suggests: he was, as Godman describes him, a nimble survivor, a “chameleon of cultural politics.”³⁹ Nevertheless, instead of sharing Godman’s scepticism about the self-proclaimed “novelty” of Adriani’s annual prolusions, it seems to me that Adriani’s continuing

³⁷ R, fols. 26r–33r (cf. Verde, *Lo Studio Fiorentino*, 4/3, pp. 1340–1345, Godman, *From Poliziano*, pp. 171–79, 186–87) at 28r: “neque intelligentis Deum naturamque contraria contrariis miscuisse simul aut vinxisse bonum malo.”; 30r–v, citing Lucret. I, 1–2; 31v: “Sunt etiam qui secuti Epicurum felicitatem metiantur scientia causarum omnium et dispectu religionis, ut est notissimum illud [citing Virg. G. II, 490, cf. 492–93], nec desunt qui turpi amorem hanc ipsam felicitatem decernant.”

³⁸ R, fols. 36v–37r, cf. L, fol. 65r (1511): “et contra dolores nostri portus/obstetricium quo Zenonis porticus crevit, patuit licium Aristotelis, Empedoclis discordi et amicitia coierunt, Pithagorae silentium auditum est latuit [L, om. R], Anaxagorae omiomeria, floruit Epicuri voluptas et hortus Democriti athomus per inane iactata est, Diogenis sartum est pallium et Academia...gloriosa salubrisque fuit, per quam Socrates mortales docuit divinatorum et humanorum omnium certam invenire rationem.”

³⁹ Godman, *From Poliziano*, pp. 148, 213, and on Adriani’s Platonism, *ibid.*, pp. 194–97. Francesco da Diacceto was appointed to read philosophy in Florence University from 1501, Verde, *Lo Studio Fiorentino*, 2, pp. 218–19, and “philosophie moralis et Platonicæ” in 1503–04, Gigazzi MS 109 (libro 6), fol. 2r (11 March 1503/4).

emphasis on the topics of his earlier lectures looks not backward to Bruni, as Godman suggests,⁴⁰ but forward to Machiavelli and to early modern natural science. For despite changing the emphasis of his lectures, his thinking continues to be dominated by three themes that I shall discuss in turn: primitivism, superstitious religion and atomism, which are interpreted within a naturalistic philosophical framework in which Fortune and Nature co-star with God as equal “authors” of everything that happens, fortuitous chance and nature helping as well as hindering men’s success but never controlling their destiny if men can learn to react flexibly to their influence.

This is particularly true of the oration he delivered on the death of Giuliano de’ Medici in 1516, in which all the themes discussed above reappear.⁴¹ Although praise of the Medici was, in this context, inevitable, what is striking—as John McManamon has described so well in the introduction to his edition of the oration—is the naturalistic imagery adopted by Adriani to praise the Medici within a framework of republicanism. Portraying the Medici as a source of illumination, he explained their exile and return as phases of the sun and moon that were welcomed and mourned as they alternately provided light and warmth before disappearing to illuminate others.⁴² Yet instead of adopting the Platonic implications of this metaphor by comparing the Medici to the sun as the ultimate Good, or above the laws and the stars, as earlier eulogists had done, Adriani interpreted it through the lens of primitivism. From this perspective, the sun’s changing phases were Nature’s device to make its reappearances more appreciated “through its ritual of coming and going”; and the Florentines in their changing attitude to the Medici were behaving like primitive peoples who reacted to the phases of the sun in the same way, wanting to capture and control the sun when it first departed only to welcome it back on its return.⁴³

The theme of primitivism in this oration also reappears in his opening lecture for the academic year 1514–15, in which the pre-1494 years are

⁴⁰ See n. 19 above.

⁴¹ R, fols. 71r–78r, edited, with introduction, by John McManamon, “Marketing a Medici Regime: the Funeral Oration of Marcello Virgilio Adriani for Giuliano de’ Medici (1516),” *Renaissance Quarterly* 44 (1991), 1–41.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 33, 35; cf. p. 16.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 36–37; cf. p. 17. On Platonising eulogies of the earlier Medici, Alison Brown, “Platonism in Fifteenth-Century Florence and Its Contribution to Early Modern Political Thought,” *Journal of Modern History*, 58 (1986), 383–415, repr. in eadem, *The Medici in Florence*, pp. 227–34.

presented as a period so far removed from the “innocence of antiquity and the sanctity of our forefathers” that older men would scarcely recognize the region, nor the fathers of his students recognize their own city, transformed as both were by the dissolute behaviour and licentiousness of barbarian armies.⁴⁴ Once upon a time, Adriani told his audience, soldiers had fought with stakes, without laws, signs, oaths of allegiance or military leaders, sickness was cured by experience not medicine, and nature was understood to consist only of fire, air, atoms “and that infinite matter called *homoeomeria*” (as Anaxagoras had wrongly described it, according to Lucretius).⁴⁵ Later developments in art and philosophy—including discoveries like printing and the new worlds found and colonised by the Portuguese⁴⁶—transformed this early primitivism, yet it remained relevant as a model for imitation. For everything was based on imitation, he argued, even Platonic Ideas, which were not separate from nor “outside” the works they produced but simply represented a preceding model for them; thus in the early days, when fields lay neglected and uncultivated, the art of weaving was learnt from spiders, ploughing was copied from rooting pigs, grafting from birds hiding seeds in trees, navigation from floating tree trunks, the art of sailing from the flight of birds; and as civilisation developed, letters were copied from cranes in flight, houses from swallows, architecture from the human body, and in politics both of our models were copied from nature, republics from ants and monarchies from bees.⁴⁷ Godman explains Adriani’s theory of mimesis

⁴⁴ L, 74v–88v at 75r (cf. R, 96r–109r at 96v), summarized by Godman, *From Poliziano*, pp. 200–201; cf. Lucret. I, 830, 845–46: “Nos etiam intra vigesimum annum quo temporis spatio tot barbararum gentium armis et dolis pene omnes periimus alienorum morum contagia [R, collatio L] in ganea, ebrietate, amoribus levitate, inpuentia, fraudibus, muliebrique corporis ornatu, omnem Italiam tantum profecisse sentimus, ut nec senioribus omnis haec regio, nec patribus vestris eadem haec civitas videatur, tam longe ab antiquitatis innocentia et maiorum nostrorum sanctitate discessimus.”

⁴⁵ L, fol. 75v, cf. R, 96v–97r quoted by Godman, *From Poliziano*, pp. 200–201, n. 106, the passage beginning “Fuit quondam cum praeustis sudibus et ex corticibus arborum ocreis sine lege, sine signis, sine sacramento, sine duce miles pugnaret”; cf. Lucret. I, 830 and ff.

⁴⁶ L, fol. 76v, cf. R, 97v–98r, the Pillars of Hercules “finem illic orbis ipse constituit quo tantum progredi potuerat; supererat tamen quod nostra aetate a Lusitanis Regibus inveniendum et possidendum adhuc esset” and on printing, Godman, *From Poliziano*, p. 201 n. 108.

⁴⁷ L, fols. 79v–81r, cf. R. 101v–102r: “forma in opere, idea extra opus, nec tantum extra sed ante opus est” (79v); “Nulli colebant arva quondam agricolae, squalabat omnis ager, inculta omnia in eo erant: id solum ex terra homini aderat quod sponte sua conspersave imbre aut sole tepefacta comunis mater proferebat; docuit eos tandem sus, tam brutum animal, dum rictu suo arva subigit, radices herbarum querens proscindere arva, friatisque exemplo eius multa aratione glebis uberiores annonam expectare. In hoc ipso studio insitionem aliam casus aliam docuerunt aves in arborum cavis semina abscondentes, eaque imitatione multam

as his bid for novelty as he attempted to combine “the disparate strands” of his many interests into a integrated whole, but we can see it also as evidence of his continuing interest in Lucretian naturalism in the face of the current fashion for Platonic idealism in the university.⁴⁸ Earlier in his lecture *Adriani* had asserted that “if our leaders and authors in religion and laws are God and the interpreters of God, and in morals Nature,” “in everything else, they left us to find out the truth and its middle ground by our own efforts and studies,”⁴⁹ an approach which provides us with a key to understanding the place of Lucretius in the wider spectrum of his outlook on life.

In this spectrum *Adriani*’s attack on superstition, his second Lucretian theme, played an important part, for by helping young Florentines to understand Nature in all its forms, he hoped to enable them to live free from fear. The political context in 1514 was, of course, very different from that of post-1494 Florence, and *Adriani* adjusted his theme accordingly by apparently accepting Platonic idealism just before the Medici’s return in 1512 and laughing with Democritus at his success in surviving unscathed when his assistant in the chancery, Machiavelli, lost his job.⁵⁰ But although the overt theme of the 1512 lecture may have been, as Godman says,

deinceps in alienis arboribus pomorum nos fecimus adoptionem. Tota est navigatio nobis a fluctantibus in aqua arborum truncis...” (80v); “...litteras primum formaverunt in caelo volantes contemplati grues, et domos sibi aedificare non aliunde priusquam ab hyrundinibus didicerunt: et in architectura humani corporis modulos secuti eius artis primi auctores columnas earumque quantitates et partes constituerunt... Iam vero in civili illa disciplina quae omnium princeps et domina ceteras omnes in se complexa est, bone deus, quam felici exemplo et presenti imitatione a natura usi sumus, quae premonstrata nobis in formicis popularitate, in examine apum regiae potestatis imagine, temperandas contrahaendisque in medium a duobus extremis alias nobis rerumpublicarum formas reliquit...” (81r). On imitation and the growth of civilisation, Lucret. V, esp. 1350–60, 1440–56; Vitruvius, *De architectura*, II, 1, esp. §1, III, 1, §2.

⁴⁸ Godman, *From Poliziano*, pp. 201–202. On the “forti antagonismi culturali” between the platonising teachers Francesco da Diacceto and Francesco Verino and the Lucretian Raffaele Franceschi, see Armando Verde, “Il secondo periodo de Lo Studio Fiorentino (1504–1528),” in *L’Università e la sua storia*, ed. Paolo Renzi (Arezzo, 1998), p. 109 (with warmest thanks to Jonathan Davies for telling me about this article and sending me a copy of it). According to Verde’s earlier article, “Dottorati a Firenze e a Pisa, 1505–1528,” in *Xenia Medii Aevi historiam illustrantia oblata T. Kaeppli*, eds. Raymundus Creytens O.P. and Pius Kunzle O.P. (Rome, 1978), p. 767, Franceschi was appointed to teach moral philosophy and logic in Pisa in 1509 but was replaced in 1511 by Francesco Verino.

⁴⁹ L, 75v–76r, cf. R, 97r: “Si quidem in religione et legibus Deum Deique interpretes, in moribus Naturam duces et auctores habemus...//...in ceteris vero veritatem quodque esset [L, essent R] in medio positum labore studioque inveniendum nobis reliquerunt.”

⁵⁰ Godman, *From Poliziano*, pp. 194–99. The topic of *Adriani*’s 1512 lecture, Democritus’ laughter and Heraclitus’ grief, was already familiar to Florence from the fresco on the walls of Ficino’s villa. Arthur Field, “The Platonic Academy of Florence,” in *Marsilio Ficino*, eds. Allen and Rees, pp. 372–74.

the contrast between the attitudes of Democritus and Heraclitus to life's troubles, a clue to its underlying theme is provided by the homely story Adriani used to illustrate his argument. "Not many days ago," he told his audience, "a father, a working man [*e plebe homo*] cheerfully performed the burial of his dead son with his own hands, which his sad and grieving parish priest had refused to do." Surprised by the contrasting reactions of the cheerful father and the grieving priest, supported by duly pious local mourners, he was told by some unlearned soul—but who, as it turned out, showed ancient wisdom—that the priest was grieving because he was prohibited by religion and law from making money out of the burial, whereas the father was happy that his son was freed from life's perils and dangers.⁵¹ In showing that there were no laws against piety and religion, this wise and serious plebeian reminded Adriani of Democritus and served to demonstrate how the great weight oppressing our minds can be moved by such a small and homely exemplar of cheerfulness in the face of death—just as a heavy ship can be driven by the wind and steered by a rudder, or heavy bodies can be moved by small cogs and tread wheels.⁵²

Although he is unnamed, these homely examples of rudders and cogs were in fact drawn from Lucretius, who uses them to make his point that "small elements can sway large bodies and transfer their weight."⁵³ And Lucretius's attack on superstitious religion was surely the real theme of his lecture, not Adriani's success in displacing Machiavelli, as we can see when, in order to illustrate Democritus's philosophy, he includes the famous lines of "the greatest of our poets," *Suave, mari magno*, "O how sweet it is, when the winds are whipping the oceans, to watch another's struggles"—in this way clearly identifying Lucretius as the greatest of Latin poets.⁵⁴ How much

⁵¹ R, fol. 38r, L, 89r–v: "Sepelliebat non multo ante hanc diem pater, e plebe homo, defunctum filium propriisque manibus ridens sepulturam curabat quam tristes et merens sacerdos parochus eius a se reiiciebat. Convenerant [enim ad eum *om. L*] tristes aliquot et merentes circumstabant [ad eum L] ut fit, vicini et amici plures officiosa pietate et religione homini faventes."

⁵² R, fols. 38r–v, L, 89v–90r: "ex quotidianae rei imagine"; see following note.

⁵³ Lucret. IV, 898–906, beginning: "Nec tamen illud in his rebus mirabile constat, tantula quod tantum corpus corpuscula possunt/contorquere et onus totum convertere nostrum."

⁵⁴ R, fols. 38v, L, 90r ("...Et suave mari magno"), R, 41v, L, 94r–v: "Audite quae maximus nostrorum vatium cecinerit de voluptate sapientis," "Suave, mari magno turbantibus aequiora ventis... quia cernere suave est" (Lucret. II, 1–6), after a long passage invoking Democritus and urging him to "ingredere et accedere propius ad nos" (R, 40r–41v; L, 92v–94r).

better it was, he continued, to laugh and rejoice with Democritus than to grieve with Heraclitus over men's unhappiness and false values, worst of which was "praying to the gods as the authors of all good things and then despising them as though incapable of punishing them, and fearing them as judges yet swearing falsely by them as though they were nothing."⁵⁵

This was written more than a decade after Savonarola's death and after the return of the Medici that year, 1512, yet we can see how closely it follows the themes of his earlier lectures in using Lucretius to attack propitiatory religion. It seems likely that Lucretius was also the source of Adriani's practice of illustrating his lectures and texts with vivid contemporary images to make his point, which—as we shall see—he referred to in his later *Commentary* on Dioscorides as Lucretius's use of everyday and ordinary examples "to bring out into the open" clandestine theories about nature "that had until then been hidden in darkness."⁵⁶ So when we find him opening his first lecture on Horace's *Satires* with an account of the recent visit to Naples of the ambassador of the Sultan Bajazet II, a man well received by Ferrante although "ignorant of our religion," we are alerted to the possibility that this story too may provide a vehicle for another "clandestine" or heterodox opinion, as indeed it does.⁵⁷ For among the many sights in Naples that amazed the ambassador was a fresco of the miracle of St. Benedict moving a heavy stone placed by a "bad devil" that no one else could shift. A bystander was again at hand to explain the scene, and although the ambassador was delighted by its novelty—admiring the goodness of a God so kind to Christians and the sanctity of a man so empowered by his religion that he could perform this miracle⁵⁸—he nevertheless wondered what non-Christians back

⁵⁵ R, fol. 42r, L, 95r: "Et quod turpissimum est, precantes deos velut omnium bonorum auctores, despicientes deinde eos [om. L] velut ulcisci non valentes et timentes eos ut iudices peierantes [R, precantes L], autem per eos veluti nulli sint."

⁵⁶ Discussed below, n. 68; on his fondness for concrete exempla, cf. Godman, *From Poliziano*, p. 178; Grafton, *Bring Out Your Dead*, pp. 2–3.

⁵⁷ Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale, MS. II. V. 78 (= N), "Prima in sermones Horatii schola" (autograph), fols. 1r–10v, "religionis nostrae tamen ignarum hominem" (1r). According to Ferraioli's *Una cronaca napoletana figurata del Quattrocento*, ed. Riccardo Filangieri (Naples, 1956), pp. 108, 110, an ambassador of Bajazet visited Naples in November–December 1494, preceding a peace treaty between Alfonso II of Naples and Bajazet signed on 16 December.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, fols. 1v–2r: "laudavit hominis sanctitatem qui religionis nostrae signo tantum potuerit, admiratus est etiam Dei bonitatem qui tam benigne cum Christianis agat, tamque aperte eos de se moneat" (1v). The miracle is described in *Gregorii Magni Dialogi*, II, 9, ed. Umberto Moricca (Rome, 1924), pp. 96–97.

home would make of it. To the more intelligent of those “ignorant of the Christian religion,” Adriani suggested, the stone would represent our minds crushed by the immovable weight almost as “our poet, not always sound in mind” described it, as “the mountain of misery” lying on our hearts through ignorance that makes us long to change places and travel, only to return home because we feel no better abroad.⁵⁹

“Our poet, not always sound in mind” was, of course, Lucretius, and it is his attack on superstition that explains the topical example Adriani used as a device to introduce his theme. Closely associated with it, through Democritus, was the search for happiness by acknowledging the fickleness of fortune. This, too, was clearly a response to the fluctuating fortunes of Florence during his years of teaching: three different political regimes, religious strife and foreign invasions, which explain his emphasis on the need to adapt to change and accept life as a mixture of good and bad.⁶⁰ His second lecture on Horace opened with another reference to Democritus’s laughter at mankind’s follies in the face of fortune. This, too, he illustrated with a contemporary example, the unexpected and disastrous storm which turned the French victory after the battle of Ravenna in 1512 into defeat and in turn helped to destroy the republican regime in Florence, or—as Adriani called it—“the shipwreck of your popular state.”⁶¹ And in his third lecture on Horace, the opening theme of men’s inability to stick to the golden mean soon led him into a discussion of change and mobility in ancient theories of the universe: the ever-changing

⁵⁹ N, fol. 2r–v, “Raciocinatus etiam est... ut qui illic ingeniosiores sint, Christiane religionis ignari, imaginem novae rei admirati credant signari lapide illo animos nostros... nullis opibus [etc.] exonerare te possis... Neque enim est quod minus intelligamus, neque quo magis decipiamur, quam incognito hoc nostri animi pondere, tantum non poetae nostri non semper bene sani illud enuntians,” quoting Lucret. III, 1053–1059, followed by 3 lines from Horace, *Sat.* I, 1, 1–3 (quoting the more famous lines from Horace, “caelum, non animum, mutant, qui trans mare currunt,” *Epist.* I, xi, 26, later in the same lecture, 8r).

⁶⁰ Cf. nn. 27 and 37 above. On the misery of these years, see n. 23 above and Iacopo di Piero Guicciardini’s letter in 1523 to his nephew quoted by Verde, “Il secondo periodo de Lo Studio Fiorentino,” p. 105.

⁶¹ N, fol. 11r–12v, “Secunda in Oratii sermones schola,” beg. “Ridebat quondam, ut audistis, Democritus omnia quae quotidie male sani homines peccarent... Qualem [the French victory] Christianae salutis anni xii^{mo} supra millesimum et quingentesimum anno ad Adriaticum mare sub Ravennae moenibus... gloriosam sibi, regi calamitosam, amicis inutillem, omnibus vero lamentabilem.” (11r); “satisque sit doluisse tunc naufragia popularitatis vestrae, et in dolore illo cognovisse quam turpiter et irritum vincendi studio propositaeque finis inutili eventu, fere omnes laboremus.” (11v.) The battle of Ravenna on 11 April 1512 was followed in May by the Swiss descent on Milan, their control being confirmed after the battle of Novara in 1513, which also established the emperor Maximilian as duke of Milan. On its impact on other Italian writers, see n. 74 below.

cycles of Empedoclean particles that were in turn attracted to and then dispelled from the centre of the universe, like the similarly restless “atom of Epicurus” that moved endlessly through an infinite void, “driven about [now quoting Lucretius] with frequent meetings and partings.”⁶²

Epicurean atomism is the third theme that represents continuity in Adriani’s naturalist philosophy even after the return of the Medici. Like the other themes, it formed part of his argument for responding to unpredictable change and conflict by understanding the world of nature and not fearing it. Acknowledging the practical bent of the Florentines, he began another lecture by accepting that his audience would be less interested in philosophy than in agriculture (*rem agrariam*); but by working with and not against nature, he told them, they would at least be helped to achieve the tranquil life that Epicurus had recommended and be encouraged towards the lesser evil if not towards the higher good—so that those interested in investigating the crimes and misfortunes of others would turn instead to investigate the secrets of nature, the politically ambitious would turn from the republic to the high offices of dancing and gymnastics, and the blood-thirsty would turn from manslaughter to hunting and the slaughter of animals.⁶³ Gesturing in this way towards the new Florentine life-style of dancing and hunting as lesser evils in the present time, he nevertheless insisted that it was far more praiseworthy to reach to the heavens in their studies. And as “a sort of wine-tasting,” he at once plunged into a discussion of Empedocles’ theory of the conflictual elements, which moved endlessly between sympathy and antipathy, strophe and antistrophe, agreement and discord—a theory with which Lucretius and the Epicureans (“he who constructed everything from the chance clash of atoms”) only partly approved. Adriani did not intend to teach the heavens’ influence on the

⁶² N, 13r–15r (partly autograph), quoting Horace, *Sat.* I, ii, 1–3 (13r); “Acrigentino Sapienti primordia rerum non cessant sui animi impetus moveri semper De caelo ad terram, de terra ad sydera mundi” (13v); “athomus Epicuri cui nihil in medium ferebatur per infinitum inane iactata nullibi quiescere poterat, ‘Conciliis et discidiis exercita crebris’” (Lucr. del *De rer. nat.* II, 120, with “vide Lucretium in 2^o4^a” in the margin in Adriani’s autograph) (14r). Cf. Horace, *Epist.* I, xii, 12–20, where he suggests moving from the themes of riches and fortune to “loftier themes” like the theories of Democritus and Empedocles.

⁶³ L, fols. 95v–103r, cf. R. 89r–95r, beg. “Admonuit nos” (possibly delivered in 1513–14 or 1515–16, since what Godman describes as the 1515 lecture is in fact that of 1511, *From Poliziano*, pp. 199, cf. 196–97): “non esse scilicet contra naturam pugnandum sed... paulatim ad meliora aut quae minus turpia sint in eo genere transferri animum oportere, curiosos ab investigandis sceleribus et infortuniis aliorum ad eruscationem secretorum naturae... ambitiosos a republica ad imperia chorearum puerorumque in gymnasiis, feroces et caedis avidos ad venationem et carnificinam animalium” (95v).

planetary system that was thought to control our lives, nor the topic of the temperaments adopted in his book by “the great expert in nature,” Galen, since nothing “could be farther from the truth and our religion than to deprive our minds of liberty and leave them subject to matter.”⁶⁴ This was clearly dangerous ground, but Adriani nevertheless admitted that it was a generally-received opinion, confirmed by experience, that certain foods, birds, sacrifices and incantations have the power to move our minds, like the amulet which he remembered his grandmother hanging around his neck when he had a quartian fever as a child, which he laughed at until he later read that Galen approved of it as a cure, being “very skilled in medicine but a bad writer about religion, affirming there were only natural causes of things.”⁶⁵

Adriani’s interest in the medical role of contraries looked forward to his *Commentary* on Dioscorides’ *De materia medica*, which was first printed by the Giuntine Press in Florence in 1518.⁶⁶ But although his interest in medicine seems to sanitize the less orthodox topics of his lectures, in fact it serves to highlight their unorthodoxy by reminding us not only that Galen was regarded as “a bad writer about religion” but also that the determinist theories of planetary influences were contrary to Christian religion -as, of course, were the atomist theories of Democritus, Epicurus and Lucretius. Despite this, Adriani continued to discuss them in his lectures as well as in his *Commentary* on Dioscorides. It was in the surprising context of this *Commentary* that Adriani introduced the subject of the “new and clandestine” theory of atomism, in order to explain why some plants have a bitter

⁶⁴ L, fols. 96r–97r, cf. R, 89v–90r: “Verumtamen sunt et aliae huius studii plures et maiores laudes... ex immortali incorruptoque caelo conformationeque siderum eius et ex media natura, quarum brevem vobis hodie mensuram et quasi gustum (ut in vindemia fit) rendere est animus... Habet natura duas quasi basis... sympathiam Graeci alteram, alteram antipathiam appellaverunt.../et is qui fortuito concursu athormorum omnia construebat non nisi hoc consensu earum vitam fieri probavit” (96v, R, 89v cf. Lucret. I, esp. 758–60), “Galenus vir naturae peritissimus... quandoquidem nihil magis a veritate religioneque nostra abhorret quam privatis animis libertate sua obnoxios materiae eos relinquere” (97r, R, 90r).

⁶⁵ L, fol. 97v, cf. R, 90v: “cum Galenum legissem virum quidem totius medicine peritissimum sed religionis malum auctorem et extra naturales causas nihil affirmantem.” See also his discussion of amulets in his 1497–98 inaugural lecture, R, fol. 22r, and in his *Commentary* on Dioscorides (Florence, 1523/4), IV, 126 (De Tripolio herba), fol. 264r.

⁶⁶ Discussed by Godman, *From Poliziano*, pp. 212–34; Grafton, *Bring Out Your Dead*, pp. 2–10; and Jerry Stannard, “Dioscorides and Renaissance Materia Medici,” in *Herbs and Herbalism in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, eds. Katherine E. Stannard and Richard Kay (Aldershot, 1991), pp. 9–10; on the Galenic cure by contraries, see Nancy G. Siraisi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine* (Chicago, 1990), p. 145. In what follows, I cite the 1523/4 Giuntine edition.

taste and others are sweet according to “the Epicurean maxims which the Roman poet once taught his citizens in his most delightful poem about the nature of things, which was in turn based on the much earlier heresy of Abderitan Democritus.”⁶⁷ The reason was that honey and milk were made of smooth and round atoms whereas bitter wormwood and centaury were made from atoms that were hooked and angular (as Lucretius had explained), since every natural thing that met and adhered in the immense void consisted of different shapes. “And because the thing was new and clandestine, Lucretius [now named for the first time] used an everyday and simple analogy to bring into the light of day what had hitherto been hidden in the majesty and shadows of nature,” that is, he compared the creation of objects by atoms to the formation of words by letters in the alphabet, some letters formed to mean one thing, or one substance, some another, “and, as he said, by changing or adding a little or changing place, ‘fire’ (*ignis*) becomes ‘fir’ (*lignis* = “wood”) and so on.”⁶⁸

The use of “everyday and simple” analogies to illustrate his argument was Adriani’s own practice, as we have seen, suggesting that he too employed them to illuminate topics he regarded as clandestine. Not all his references to Lucretius in his Dioscorides *Commentary* were equally tendentious; for instance, the houseleek that thrives best on its own recalled Lucretius’s happy man living in isolation from the troubles of others, the “sweetness” of whose situation, Adriani reminds us (in case we should miss the allusion to “Suave, mari magno”), lay not in enjoying another’s troubles but in escaping them himself.⁶⁹ But we know that Lucretius remained a dangerous poet when Adriani again called him “the not always completely

⁶⁷ Dioscorides, *De materia medica* I, 20, “De musco,” fol. 21v: “Qui ex Epicuri placitis rerum naturam suavissimo carmine cives suos Romanus poeta quondam docuit, et qui multo ante in eadem haeresi eadem primus instituerat Abderites Democritus.”

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, fol. 21v, “Et quoniam nova et clandestina res erat, quotidiano et humilia a vobum nostrarum elementis et litterarum notis exemplo quod in maiestate et tenebris naturae adhuc occultitur in aperto a Lucretio ostendebatur, qui non aliter variari in natura formas diceret quam variatis in sermone nostro elementis, alias subinde atque alias significari et intelligi rerum substantias passim videmus; fierique, ut ille dicebat, mutatis paucis additisve aut non suo loco servatis ex lignis ignes et ex aliis alia”; cf. *Lucr.* I, 912–14 cf. 197, 824–27; II, 688–98, 1013–16; and on hooked atoms, II, 398–407.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, IV, 81, fol. 251r; cf. *Lucr.* II, 1–4. Others discuss Lucretius’s names for plants, his praise of Athens, his account of man’s dreams, the “slippery snake that casts off its vestment among the thorns.” *Ibid.*, I, 49 and III, 43; I, 126; III, 149; II, 17, fols. 34r–v and 174r, 62v, 215r, 88v, cf. *Lucr.* II, 847, etc.; VI, 2, IV, 1014–17; 1020–23; IV, 60–61. Cf. IV, 67 and V, 100, fols. 284v, 328r, referring to *Lucr.* V, 898–900, and VI, 906–909.

sane Roman poet” or failed to name him at all, as when discussing *tus* or frankincense. Dioscorides called it an atom, he tells us, because it was indivisible and not because it was like the atoms of Democritus or Epicurus, without explaining to us that it was Lucretius who had compared the difficulty of separating the scent from lumps of frankincense to that of “drawing the mind and spirit from the whole body without the dissolution of all.”⁷⁰ In a book dedicated to a pope who had recently promulgated a decree declaring the immortality of the soul an official dogma of the Church, this would not perhaps have been appropriate.⁷¹ The absence of Lucretius on this occasion nevertheless returns us to the question that I raised initially about the potential danger of the newly-recovered pagan texts to Christian dogma and the need to read references to them carefully with this in mind.

Nearly all Adriani’s references to Lucretius threatened Christian orthodoxy, especially the three themes of primitivism, superstitious religion and atomism that are leitmotifs in his university lectures. Within the wide spectrum of ancient philosophers whom Adriani engaged with in his lectures, I have—as a “prowler” working on the margins of orthodoxy and heterodoxy—followed the trail of Lucretius because it seems to me that he leads us into new territory. Lucretius was important not only for his heretical philosophy but also for the poetic language and the analogies he used to expound this philosophy. By imitating his practice of using homely examples to discuss “new and clandestine” theories, Adriani points us, through his own exempla drawn from local events, to topics that he similarly regarded as new and clandestine—not only atomism, which he explains in Lucretius’s instructive analogy of the alphabet, but also Lucretius’s critique of superstitious religion, which weighs us down like the stone in the fresco of St Benedict’s miracle and like the grieving priest and mourners in the story of the father cheerfully burying his own son.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the influence of Adriani’s lectures on his colleagues and on the generation of students that he

⁷⁰ Ibid., I, 161, fol. 81r (cf. I, 78, fol. 43v): “Nec qua ratione Democritus et Epicurei atomos suas dixerunt intelligendum id est” see Lucr. III, 327–334.

⁷¹ On the lively debate about immortality and the papal decree of 19 December 1513, see Giovanni Di Napoli, *L’immortalità dell’anima nel Rinascimento* (Turin, 1963), esp. pp. 179–81, 220–22; Felix Gilbert, “Cristianesimo, umanesimo e la bolla ‘Apostolici Regiminis’ del 1513,” *Rivista storica italiana* 79 (1967), 976–90, esp. 977; and on the decree, Eric A. Constant, “A Reinterpretation of the Fifth Lateran Council Decree *Apostolici Regiminis* (1513),” *Sixteenth Century Journal* 33 (2002), 353–79.

taught in the university for more than two decades. There can be no doubt, however, that his empirical approach to nature not only reflected but must also have encouraged new developments in medicine and the natural sciences, as well as in political thinking. We know that Francesco Guicciardini was an enthusiastic member of Adriani's audience, and traces of Adriani's influence can be seen in the scientific and political writings of Francesco and his brothers.⁷² Adriani's discussion of the power of fortune in so many of his lectures helped to establish the new attitude that dominated Italian historiography after 1494. Bartolomeo Scala had already associated fortune with Lucretius' "chance clash of indivisible atoms" in his 1496 *Defence of Florence against its critics*,⁷³ and Adriani's continuing reference to fortune in his lectures, especially in his second lecture on Horace describing the battle of Ravenna and its outcome in 1512–13, transformed the outlook of a new generation. Francesco Guicciardini wrote two different papers on the way in which fortune's sudden change transformed the situation in Italy after the battle of Ravenna, and it was also discussed by Francesco Vettori and Machiavelli in their letters to each other and in their writings.⁷⁴ Machiavelli, as Adriani's colleague in the chancery and possibly his former student in the university, seems to have been particularly influenced by Adriani's opinion that Fortune was jointly responsible with Nature and God for everything that happened, but that if men learnt to react flexibly to their influence, they could retain freedom over their destiny -or, as Machiavelli more pithily put it, "that if it's true that fortune is arbiter of half of our actions, she lets us control the other half—or nearly the other half."⁷⁵

⁷² Godman, *From Poliziano*, pp. 182–83; Brown, "Lucretius and the Epicureans," pp. 60–61 and n. 125.

⁷³ Brown, "Lucretius and the Epicureans," p. 36 n. 66.

⁷⁴ Francesco Guicciardini, "Delle condizioni d'Italia dopo la giornata di Ravenna" and "Sulle mutazioni seguite dopo la battaglia di Ravenna," in idem, *Scritti politici e ricordi*, ed. Roberto Palmarocchi (Bari, 1933), pp. 80–88 at 80: "Mutossi in uno subito la fortuna"; Francesco Vettori to Machiavelli, 20 August 1513, in Machiavelli, *Lettere*, ed. Franco Gaeta (Milan, 1961), p. 284 (cf. John Najemy, *Between Friends: Discourses of Power and Desire in the Machiavelli-Vettori Letters of 1513–1515* [Princeton, 1993], pp. 85 and 284); Machiavelli, *Il principe*, chaps. 25 and 26, ed. Sergio Bertelli (Milan, 1983), pp. 98–105, at 105 referring to "la giornata di Ravenna."

⁷⁵ *Il principe*, chap. 25, p. 99: "iudico potere esser vero che la fortuna sia arbitra della metà delle azioni nostre, ma che *etiam* lei ne lasci governare l'altra metà, o presso, a noi." On Machiavelli's education and Lucretius, Godman, *From Poliziano*, p. 149 and n. 105; cf. Robert Black, "Machiavelli, Servant of the Florentine Republic," in *Machiavelli and Republicanism*, eds. Gisela Bock et al. (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 74–75.

This view of fortune's power in turn encouraged interest in the other unorthodox themes of Adriani's lectures, especially Lucretian primitivism and his criticism of superstitious religion, which were taken up especially by Machiavelli. Machiavelli's description of how early men passed their lives "scattered like beasts" echoes the Lucretian primitivism of Adriani's lectures, as does his utilitarian concept of justice as a contract of mutual self-interest "neither to inflict nor suffer hurt" (or as Epicurus said, in the words already referred to above in Scala's dialogue *On Laws and Legal Judgments*, "not to hurt or be hurt").⁷⁶ And Machiavelli was also critical of superstitious religion, reminding us that many kingdoms had been lost by those who believed God would fight for them while "idle and upon their knees." But far from allaying fear of the unknown by propitiating the gods, men—as Lucretius had explained—placed themselves in their thrall, and also in the thrall of their leaders who ensured obedience by claiming their laws came from God; for "fear," as Machiavelli wrote, "is sustained by a dread of punishment that never ever leaves you." We know from his role in Luigi Guicciardini's dialogue *On Free Will* that Machiavelli was regarded as a sceptic who systematically ran circles round his Christian disputants—reflecting the view of his friends and colleagues that he was at least unorthodox and non-conformist in his religious views, if not a non-believer.⁷⁷

The fact that Lucretius's influence on Machiavelli is only just beginning to be acknowledged, while his influence on Adriani has not hitherto been acknowledged at all, explains the premise of my argument: that silence, and even protestations of orthodoxy, do not necessarily prove orthodoxy. This is demonstrated particularly clearly by the treatise *On the Immortality of the Soul* which Raffaello Franceschi appended to his paraphrase of Lucretius in 1504. Franceschi was a young Florentine student at Bologna, and according to his preface to Tommaso Soderini (nephew of the Life Gonfalonier of Florence, Piero Soderini), he decided

⁷⁶ Discussed more fully in Brown, "Lucretius and the Epicureans," pp. 58–61, esp. nn. 119–21.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 57–58, nn. 114–117, citing Emanuele Cutinelli-Rèndina, *Chiesa e religione in Machiavelli* (Pisa-Rome, 1998); John Najemy, "Papirius and the Chickens," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 60 (1999), 659–81; and Felix Gilbert, "Machiavelli in an Unknown Contemporary Dialogue," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 1 (1938), 163–66. I quote from Machiavelli, *Dell'asino d'oro*, in *idem, Il teatro e tutti gli scritti letterari*, ed. Franco Gaeta (Milan, 1977), p. 290: "Dio, standoti ozioso e ginocchioni, ha molti regni e molti stati guasti."

to resuscitate his paraphrase with the intention of translating it into Italian at his friends' suggestion, since they said it would be useful to those wanting to understand Lucretius.⁷⁸ Franceschi became a teacher in Florence University and then Pisa, where, using "Lucretian formula," he engaged in debates about the soul "which couldn't have been more intense had Piero Pomponazzi been there," he wrote to his friends in Florence.⁷⁹ So although he had repudiated the religious views of the Epicureans in the treatise *On the Immortality of the Soul* appended to his paraphrase, he was nevertheless known as "our Lucretian philosopher" when he died in Pisa in 1524—where, we are told, there were many black-clad mourners, one friend reporting the news that Franceschi had been received at the gates of Tartarus by Pluto with great joy, Epicurus, Lucretius and other philosophers greeting him with the words, "You've come at last."⁸⁰

Adriani had died three years earlier, shortly after the Florentine Synod of 1517 had forbidden Lucretius to be taught in schools. Unlike Franceschi, he was untainted by unorthodoxy—indeed, without pursuing the trail left in his lectures by Lucretius and the pre-Socratic philosophers who preceded him, it would be impossible to understand their important role in Adriani's thinking. By admitting random chance and natural forces into the monotheistic hierarchy of Ptolomaic Christianity, he—like Ficino and the neoplatonists described by Michael Allen—was helping himself and his pupils to liberate themselves "from the constrictions of an ancient Christian world chronology" to emerge, despite his debts to the past, "as an early modern thinker."⁸¹

⁷⁸ Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale, Postillati 101 (Bologna, 1504), fol. 4: "Verum diutius ab amicis rogatus sum ut ipsam qualiscunque futura sit in vulgarem, aiunt enim his qui Lucretium intelligendum adibunt non fore incommodam."

⁷⁹ Verde, "Il secondo periodo de Lo Studio Fiorentino," p. 112 (see nn. 48, on his earlier clashes with the Platonists Francesco da Diacceto and Francesco Verino, and 71 above).

⁸⁰ Verde, "Il secondo periodo de Lo Studio Fiorentino," pp. 118 and 128, n. 35, citing the letter of Giovanbattista Pelotti to Francesco del Nero, 2 September 1524: "venisti tandem... Multi qui Pisis modo se habent induunt se vestimentis nigris propter eius obitum, sic tristantur etiam de nece tali et de perditione prefatae animae." On his presumed homosexuality, *ibid.*, pp. 117–18.

⁸¹ Michael Allen, "Life as a Dead Platonist," in *Marsilio Ficino*, eds. Allen and Rees, p. 177.

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Abbreviations

CCLS	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina
DBI	Dizionario biografico degli italiani
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
RIS	Rerum Italicarum Scriptores

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INDEX

- Abderitan Democritus, 287
 Academy (Greek), 104, 278
 Accolti, Benedetto, 239
 Adalberto Samaritano, 44
 Adriani, Marcello, 18, 269, 272–91
 Aduard, Cistercian abbey, 161
 Aesop, 200, 203
 Africa, 148
 Agricola, Rudolf, 159, 161–63, 190–95, 230
 Alain of Lille, 42
 Alberic of Montecassino, 44
 Albertano da Brescia, 24
 Alberti, Leon Battista, 89–90, 104, 195
 Alberto da San Marino, 26, 28
 Alberto di Lovato, 54
 Alcuin, 11
 Aldine Press, 84
 Alexander of Aphrodisias, 153
 Alexander of Villedieu, 45, 48–49
 Allen, Michael J.B., 291
 Ambrose, Saint, 142, 227, 234
 Anaxagoras, 278, 280
 Anne, Saint, 162
 Antwerp, 162
 Apollo, 108
 Appian of Alexandria, 107
 Apuleius, 107
 Aquinas, Thomas, 108, 115, 117, 120–21, 123, 142, 144, 155
 Aragona, Ferrante d', 283
 Arezzo, 41
 Archivio
 dell'Abbazia, Montecasino, 61
 di Stato, "Notarile Frammenti," Pavia, 63
 di Stato, Udine, 66
 Argyropoulos, John, 249
 Aristotelianism, 89, 146, 270
 Aristotle, 12, 82, 85, 89, 100–01, 115, 134, 144, 153, 169, 173, 185, 188, 200, 202, 205, 244, 248–49, 260–61, 263, 270, 276, 278
ars dictaminis, 22, 27–28, 30, 32, 35, 37, 43–45, 49, 51, 53, 76, 183
ars disserendi, 201
ars metrificandi, 168
ars notarie, 33–34
 Arseginò, *see magistri*
- Asia, 145, 148
 Athens, 104, 209
 atomism/atomists (ancient), 269, 273, 279, 285–88; ridiculed by Savonarola, 273–74
auctorista, 184
 Augustine, Saint, 115–16, 120, 122, 133, 142, 152–53, 186–87, 227, 234
 Augustinian Hermits, 93
 Aurispa, Giovanni, 104–05, 109
 Averroes, 153
 Averroism, 270
 Averroists, 4, 114, 120
 Avicenna, 83
 Avignon, 37, 100, 104, 109, 131, 166
- Bade, Josse, 177
 Bajazet II (Sultan), 283
 Baldo degli Ubaldi, 91
 Banker, James, 50
 Barbaro, Ermolao, 164, 173, 211, 245, 248–49, 259
 Baron, Hans, 1, 8–11, 17–18, 74, 76, 127
 Bartolino di Benincasa da Canolo, 38, 52
 Bartolo da Sassoferrato, 91
 Bartolomeo of Messina, 249
 Bartolomeus Anglicus, 113
 Barzizza, Gasparino (da), 166–67, 227
 Basel (Basle), 86, 159, 163, 179, 199, 252
 Batt, Jacob, 176
 Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, 196
 Bellino Bissolo, 49–50
 Bencivenni da Gagliana, 31
 Bene da Firenze, 27–30, 32, 35, 44–45
 Benedict XIII, Pope (Pedro de Luna), 100–02, 109
 Benedict, Saint (of Nursia), 52
 Benvenuto da Imola, 116
 Benzo d'Alessandria, 32, 38, 52, 217, 231
 Berlin, 127
 Bernard, Saint, 227
 Beroaldo, Filippo, 167
 Bersuire, Pierre, 131
 Bessarion, Johannes, 140, 167
 Bible, 82–83, 116, 121, 144, 155, 163–65, 170, 172, 174–75, 179, 199; Epistle of St. James, 118; Epistles of St. Paul, 171, 174; and Erasmus, 174–79; Genesis, 118,

- 121–22; Hebrew Bible, 164, 199; Old Testament, 147; Vulgate, 82, 174, 179; *see also* New Testament
- Biblioteca
- Ambrosiana, Milan, 60–61
 - Angelica, Rome, 64
 - Antoniana, Padua, 62–63
 - Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City, 66–69, 98–99, 250
 - Capitolare, Verona, 70
 - Capitolare, Monza, 61
 - Capitular, Toledo, 251 n. 30
 - Casanatense, Rome, 64
 - Classense, Ravenna, 64
 - Comunale Augusta, Perugia, 63
 - Comunale, Mantua, 60
 - Comunale “Rilliana,” Poppi, 64
 - Dell’Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei e Corsiniana, Rome, 64
 - Laurenziana, Florence, 274 n. 26, 268
 - Malatestiana, Cesena, 59
 - Nacional, Madrid, 251 n. 30
 - Nazionale, Naples, 62
 - Nazionale Braidense, Milan, 60
 - Nazionale Centrale, Florence, 276 n. 32, 283 n. 57, 291 n. 78
 - Nazionale Centrale “Vittorio Emmanuele II,” Rome, 65
 - Nazionale Marciana, Venice, 69–70
 - Nazionale Universitaria, Turin, 65
 - Pinelli, 60 n. 110
 - Ricciardiana, Florence, 272, n. 18
 - Reale, Turin, 66
 - Trivulziana, Milan, 61
 - Universitaria, Pavia, 63
 - Vallicelliana, Rome, 65
- Billanovich, Giuseppe, 128, 218–19, 231, 241
- Billanovich, Guido, 119, 218–19, 231, 241
- Biondo, Flavio, 7, 104–05, 217, 226, 228–29, 236–37, 239
- Biraghi, Lampugnino, 109
- Black, Robert, 37, 75–77, 137–38, 156–57, 183
- Boattieri, Pietro, 33
- Boccaccio, Giovanni, 8, 47, 101, 115–16, 122, 141, 200, 207, 217, 221–23, 238
- Boethius, 42, 116–17, 121
- Bologna, 24, 26–28, 32, 34–35, 42–43, 47, 87, 119, 290
- Bonaccio d’Osio da Bergamo, 30
- Bonaço, 31
- Bonaventure, Saint, 115, 117–19, 121, 131
- bonae artes*, 184
- bonae litterae*, 227–28, 230
- Boncompagno da Signa, 29, 32–33, 43–46, 119
- Bondi, 31
- Bongino d’Azzo bresciano, 31
- Bono da Lucca, 27, 30
- Borgo San Sepolcro, 267
- Bracciolini, Poggio, 78, 104–05, 109, 133, 141, 200, 225, 227
- Bretons, 46
- Brucker, Gene, 76
- Bruni, Francesco, 47
- Bruni, Leonardo, 10, 12, 22–23, 78, 102–04, 122–23, 129, 134–35, 220–21, 223–28, 239, 272, 279
- Budé, Guillaume, 155, 200
- Burckhardt, Jacob, 1–4, 8, 73–75, 128, 139
- Burdach, Konrad, 3–4
- Buridan, Jean, 134
- Burke, Peter, 76
- Burton, Robert, 244
- Bussi, Giovanni Andrea, 110, 112
- Cabala/Cabalism (Kabbalism), 143; influence on Lefèvre d’Etaples, 173; in Reuchlin, 164–66
- Caesar, Julius, 55–56, 129, 168, 200, 203, 217
- Calvin, John, 94, 155
- Calvus, 206
- Campana, Augusto, 47
- Campesani, Benvenuto, 38
- Cangrande della Scala, 217
- Cassirer, Ernst, 76, 137
- Castiglione, Baldassare, 204, 208, 212
- Catiline, 53, 55
- Catullus, 38, 263
- Celtis, Conrad, 159–63
- Cervantes Saavedra, Miguel de, 201, 206, 212
- Chalcondyles, Demetrius, 169
- Chaldaean Oracles, 145
- Chapter 90 of Poliziano’s *Miscellanea*, 243, 245–50, 252; critical edition of, 252–265; criticism of Theodore Gaza, 248–50; reference to friends and foes, 245–47; theme of melancholy, 244, 246–47, 250
- Charlemagne, 11, 50, 52
- Charles IV, Emperor, 232
- Charles VIII, king of France, 168
- China, 139
- Choiroboscus, George, 250, 264
- Christian/northern humanism, 155, 158 and n. 5, 162–63, 165, 169–70, 172, 230;

- Lefèvre d'Étaples and Erasmus, central figures of, 172–74, 175–80; *see also* humanism
- Christianity, 89, 98, 139–40, 143–45, 148–49, 152, 155, 165, 172, 267, 270, 272, 276–77
- Chrysoloras, Manuel, 228–29, 237
- Chrysostom, John, 108
- Church Fathers, 89, 100, 107–08, 141–42, 155, 170, 172–74, 179, 227
- Cicero, 12, 40–45, 50–56, 58–63, 65–67, 70, 79, 100–01, 107, 114–15, 129, 141, 147, 166, 170, 172, 181, 183, 185–86, 192, 200–01, 205–06, 212, 224, 234–35, 249, 255, 261
- Ciceronian style, 184–85, 188, 224–25
- Ciceronianism, 23
- Cino da Pistoia, 119
- classical rebirth/renewal, 2, 4, 6, 87, 128, 215, 223, 230–31, 234, 238–39, 240–42; Chrysoloras' role in, 228–229 and n. 47, 237; Petrarch's chronological priority and primacy in, 216, 220–21, 224–25, 228, 236–37; *see also renovatio*
- classical Latin authors, 40–41; criticized by Boncompagno, 43–46; their decline in early-thirteenth-century Italy, 46–49; esteemed by Lovato Lovati, 50–53; their prevalence in twelfth-century Italy, 40–45; their revival in late-thirteenth-century Italy, 49–52
- Claudian (Claudianus), 58, 68, 70, 107
- Cola di Rienzo, 4, 232
- Colet, John, 168–69, 171–72, 175–77, 200
- Cologne, 161
- Columella, 107
- communes loci*, 202
- Comte, Auguste, 139
- Consiglio del fu Giovanni di Simeone da Matelica, 31
- controversiae*, 202, 204
- Cortesi, Paolo, 228–29
- Cosenza, 258
- Council of Florence, 108, 142
- Council of Trent, 92
- Cox, Virginia, 50–51
- Coxe, Leonard, 204
- Croce, Benedetto, 75
- Croke, Richard, 169
- Cudworth, Ralph, 143
- Curia (Papal/Roman), 32, 45, 92, 97–98, 102–06, 111
- Cusanus, Nicolaus, 140, 142–43, 145–46, 148–49
- Dalberg, Johann von, bishop of Worms, 162
- Dante Alighieri, 3, 9–10, 16, 47, 101, 122, 229
- Darwin, Charles, 148
- D'Ascoli, Enoch, 109
- Davis, Charles, 54–55
- Day, Angel, 202
- Dazzi, Manlio, 119
- Decembrio, Pier Candido, 105, 109
- De Certeau, Michele, 268
- Dei, Benedetto, 270
- De Matociis, Giovanni, 38, 217
- Democritus, 269, 278, 281–84, 286, 288
- Demosthenes, 164, 206
- De Sanctis, Francesco, 3 n. 7
- Deventer, 162–63
- D'Hesdin, Jean, 231
- dialectics, 131, 185, 191, 193–94; in Agricola, 194–95
- Diana, 56
- Di Cosimo, Piero, 151
- dictatores*, 13–14, 21–22, 35, 44–45, 220
- Digest*, 91–92, 217
- Dino del Garbo, 119
- Diodorus Siculus, 107
- Dionigi of Borgo San Sepolcro, 131
- Dionisotti, Carlo, 218, 219 n. 11
- Dioscorides, 272, 283, 286–88
- Domenico, *see magistri*
- Dominici, Giovanni, 120
- Donà, Girolamo, 245, 248, 259
- Donato degli Albanzani, 115
- Donatus, 81, 199, 253
- Doni, Anton Francesco, 90
- Druidism, 148
- Dürer, Albrecht, 244
- ecumenism, and Pico, 143–44; in Thomas More, 144–45
- education, 12, 27, 42, 46, 48–49, 52, 74–75, 77, 95, 113, 119, 127, 156–58, 162–63, 166, 173, 181–82, 184, 188, 191, 208; Bruni's treatise on, 122; humanistic, 78; Vergerio's view of, 122–23; Wimpfeling's program of, 170–71
- eloquence, 14, 74, 81, 108, 116, 122, 131, 182, 192–94, 201, 219, 222–23, 225, 227–29, 235–37; Ciceronian, 224
- Empedocles, 269, 278, 285
- England, 74, 105, 167, 169, 171, 175–76, 201–02, 208
- Enlightenment, 135, 139, 143
- Ennius, 121
- Epicurei, 153

- Epicurus, 150, 269, 271, 273, 277–78, 285–86, 288, 290–91
- Erasmus, Desiderius, 75, 81, 83, 90, 94, 155, 163, 165–72, 174–80, 184, 190, 192, 199, 201, 203, 205, 208, 212
- Erfurt, 161
- Estienne, Robert, 200
- ethopoeia*, 203
- ethos* and *pathos*, 202
- Eugene IV, Pope, 105
- Euripides, 176
- Europe, 2, 27–28, 33, 46, 57, 75, 81, 91, 93, 95, 97, 105, 111, 113, 139, 146, 148, 155–58, 174–75, 180, 183, 208, 241, 246
- Eusebius, 107, 141
- Evrard of Béthume, 48–49
- Ezzelino da Romano, 217
- Faba, Guido, 32
- Fabritius (Lucinius), 234
- Faesulae, *see* Fiesole
- Faral, Edmund, 5
- Febvre, Lucien, 199
- Fera, Vincenzo, 248
- Ferrara, 159, 161, 184, 190–91, 193
- Fichet, Guillaume, 166–67
- Ficino, Marsilio, 16, 140–41, 145, 147–53, 160, 164–65, 167, 171, 173, 244, 246–47, 270, 291
- Fiesole (Faesulae), 129, 247
- Filelfo, Francesco, 109, 227, 237
- Fiocchi, Andrea, 104–05
- Fiorentino, Francesco, 137
- Flanders, 5
- Florence, 9–11, 40–41, 74, 122, 129, 164, 169–70, 217, 228, 244, 246, 252, 268, 270, 272–74, 277–78, 281, 284, 286, 291
- Florentine Synod of 1517, 268
- Florus, 7, 166
- Fonzio, Bartolomeo, 246
- Forteguerris, Scipione, 250–51
- Fortune, 270, 273–74, 279, 284; and
Adriani, 289; and Lucretius, 273, 289;
Machiavelli's perception of, 289
- Fra Giovanni di Migliore degli Spigliati da Figline, 31
- France, 1, 5–6, 15, 27, 37, 42–43, 47, 51, 74, 78, 89–90, 101, 104–05, 109, 137–38, 140, 146, 157, 166–67, 172, 174–75, 200, 217, 227, 234, 237–38, 289
- Franceschi, Raffaello, 290–91
- Francesco da Barberino, 217
- Francesco da Fiano, 104
- Francis, Saint, 3
- Frederick III, Emperor, 160
- Frisia, 161
- Frontinus, 101, 107
- Fubini, Riccardo, 77–78, 127, 138
- Fulvio, Andrea, 240
- Fulwood, William, 203
- Gadaldino, Agostino, 84
- Gaguin, Robert, 163, 167–68
- Galen, 83–88, 286
- Garatone, Cristoforo, 104
- Garin, Eugenio, 1, 8, 11–12, 17–18, 74–75, 120, 239
- Gaspere da Verona, 108
- Gaza, Theodore, 109, 244, 248–51, 253–54, 260, 262–63, 265
- Gebhart, Emile, 3
- Geiger, Ludwig, 3
- Gellius, Aulus, 107, 186
- Gentile, Giovanni, 3 n. 7, 17, 75, 137
- Gentile da Cingoli, 31
- Geoffrey of Vinsauf, 48–49
- George of Trebizond, 105, 201, 244, 248–51, 263–64; called Pornoboscus, 250–51; *see also* Trapezuntius
- Gerardino del fu Enrico da Reggio, 31
- Gerardo Albriconi da Reggio, 30
- Gerardo da Castelfiorentino, 55
- Gerardo da Cremona, 30
- Geremia da Montagnone, 38, 52, 54, 217
- Gerì d'Arezzo, 38, 52, 54–56, 217–18, 222
- Germany, 2, 8, 74, 91, 95, 105, 157, 160–61, 167, 174
- Geertz, Clifford, 151
- Giamboni, Boni, 51
- Gilson, Etienne, 50
- Giovanni Battista Da Monte, 84
- Giovanni da Genova, 48
- Giovanni da Vignano, 52
- Giovanni del fu Jacobino da Vicenza, 30
- Giovanni del Virgilio, 38
- Giovanni di Bonandrea, 33, 38, 52
- Giovanni di Migliore, 32
- Giovannino da Mantova, 120–21
- Giunti Press, 84
- Giuntine Press, 286
- Gleason, John, 175–76
- Gnesio-Lutherans, 94
- God, Adriani's view of, 274–75, 279, 281, 289; Savonarola's use of, 276–77
- Godman, Peter, 272, 278–80, 281–82
- Goetz, Walter, 74
- Goths, 86
- Grafton, Anthony, 74–76, 182, 272

- grammar, 6, 14, 21–22, 24–30, 32–33, 35, 39, 44–49, 79, 91, 116, 122, 124, 137, 156–57, 172, 183–89, 191, 193–94, 199, 202–03, 220, 232, 267
grammaticus, 184
grammatista, 184
 Greek language, 9, 11, 75–76, 79, 84–85, 87, 108, 155, 161–63, 167, 169–70, 173, 176, 179; Erasmus' strong interest in, 176–77; essential to biblical studies, 176–77; role in humanist thought, 155, 161, 251
 Gregory, Saint (Gregory the Great), 52, 227, 234
 Gregory XI, Pope, 100, 146
 Gregory XIII, Pope, 146
 Grendler, Paul, 8, 73, 76, 156–57
 Grocyn, William, 169–70, 175–76, 200
 Groningen, 161
 Guarini, Guarino (da Verona, veronese), 75, 109, 159, 184, 191, 227
 Guarino (Guarini), Battista (Battista), 161, 184–90, 194
 Guicciardini, Francesco, 289
 Guicciardini, Luigi, 290
 Guicciardini, Piero, 247
 Guido delle Colonne, 47
 Guittone d'Arezzo, 47

 Hannibal, 234
 Hardison, O.B., 22
 Haskins, Charles Homer, 4–5, 11, 15, 138
 Hebrew language, 162–64, 199, 200; role in humanist thought, 155
 Hegius, Alexander, 163
 Heidelberg, 159, 162
 Henri d'Andeli, 46
 Henry of Settimello, 42–43
 Henry VII, Emperor, 217
 Henry VIII, king of England, 169
 Hercules, 244, 247, 260–62
 Hermetism, 141, 143, 148
 Hermonymus, Georgius, 163, 173
 Heroclitus, 282
 Heynlin von Stein, Johann, 166
 Hilary, Saint (of Poitiers), 261
 Hippocrates, 86, 88, 164
 Homer, 4, 47, 101, 107, 121, 138, 164, 199
 Honorius of Autun, 113
 Hooker, Richard, 155
 Horace, 42, 58–62, 64–69, 107, 118, 121, 159, 172, 200, 283–84, 289
 Hroswitha, 160
 Hugh of St. Victor, 118

 Hugutius of Pisa, 113
 Huizinga, Johan, 5
humanae litterae, 106
 humanism, 1, 9–10, 13–15, 17–18, 21–22, 26, 38, 42, 47, 49–50, 52, 54, 56, 73, 75–80, 83, 86, 88, 90–91, 93–95, 98, 104–06, 110–13, 119, 121, 127–28, 130–31, 135, 137, 140, 159–63, 165–66, 168, 171–72, 174, 181–82, 191, 193, 195, 217, 230–31, 236, 239, 242–44, 271; civic, 9–10, 122, 127; and classical learning, 79–80; and communal, political, and moral life, 23–26, 34–35; criticism of, 74–77; criticism, part of, 80–90; history of the concept, 181–82; Italian, 3, 6, 8, 11–12, 16, 23–24, 35, 37, 39, 51, 74, 97, 138, 155, 158, 218–21; legal, 91–92; and legal culture, 52–56; medical, 83–89, 94; and medieval encyclopedism, 113–24 passim; its modernity in the sphere of religion, 140–153 passim; nature of, 127–28; at the papal court, 102–109; and Scholasticism, 127–36 passim; and schools/universities, 90–95; and theology, 92–93; *see also* Christian humanism
humanista, defined, 79; origins of the term, 135
 humanists, early Italian, primarily laymen, 23 and n. 8, 24–33; northern, 90, 159
humanitas, 184
 Hydra, 247
 Hyginus, 101

imitatio/imitation, 9, 14, 38, 50, 182–83, 203, 205–07, 221, 233; in literature, 206–08; nature of, 205–208
 Innocent VII, Pope, 102–04
 Innocent VIII, Pope, 162
 Inquisition, 147
 Investiture Contest, 39
 Isidor[e] of Seville, 113, 115, 121, 183
 Islam, 139, 141, 146
 Italy, 1–5, 10–11, 15, 17, 24, 26, 37, 39–44, 46–51, 53, 57–70, 76–77, 86, 91–92, 95, 97, 105, 137–38, 141, 155, 157–60, 163, 166–67, 169–71, 173, 179, 183, 200, 216–18, 227–29, 236, 240–41, 265, 273, 289

 Jacques de Dimant, 52
 Jaeger, Werner, 127
 James, William, 151
 Jardine, Lisa, 74–76, 182
 Jean de Jandun, 120

- Jerome, Saint, 82, 142, 179, 227, 234, 261
 Johannes de Coreda, *see magistri*
 John XXII, Pope, 100
 Jouffroy, Jean, 107
 Jubilee of 1550, 108–09
 Judaism, 140, 146, 149
 Justin, 107
 Juvenal, 56, 59, 61–64, 66, 68–69
- Kallendorf, Craig W., 185
 Katayama, Hideo, 252
 Keckermann, Bartholomaeus, 196
 Koran, 141, 143
 Krakow, 160
 Kristeller, Paul Oskar, 1, 8, 13–18, 21, 23,
 35, 37–38, 76, 79, 127, 137–38, 140, 155,
 219–20, 241, 243, 267
- Lactantius, 107, 122, 141, 172
 Laertius, Diogenes, 268–69, 278
 Lanham, Richard A., 208
 Lapo da Castiglionchio the Younger, 99,
 104, 106, 200
 Lascaris, Janus, 250
 Latini, Brunetto, 24, 38, 50–56, 113
 Latimer, William, 169–70, 175
 Lefèvre d'Étaples, Jacques, 172–75, 180, 184
 Leo X, Pope (Giovanni de' Medici), 164; *see*
 Medici family
 Leonicensi, Nicolò (Nicolao), 83–86, 88–89,
 196
 Leto, Pomponio, 160
 Lewis, C.S., 211
 Library
 Bodleian, Oxford, 62
 British, London, 59
 Brotherton, Leeds, 59
 Butler (Columbia University), New York,
 250 n. 29
 Houghton (Harvard University),
 Cambridge, MA, 246 n. 14
 Lily, William, 172
 Linacre, Thomas, 168–70, 175–76
 Linus, 120
 Linz, 164
 Livy, 7, 14, 88, 101, 107, 200, 217, 231, 235
 Lombards, 2, 41, 46
 London, 41, 59, 71, 169
 Loschi, Antonio, 104
 Louvain, 161–62
 Lovati, Lovato, 7, 22, 24, 38–39, 49–50,
 52–54, 56, 217, 220–21, 231, 236, 241
 Lubac, Henri de, 132
 Luca da Penna, 200
- Lucan, 44, 47, 59–69, 267
 Lucca, 42
 Luchiesio, *see magistri*
 Lucian, 89–90, 205
 Lucilius, 258
 Lucretius, 150–51, 268–69, 273–74, 277–78,
 280–91
 Luder, Peter, 159, 161, 163
 Luna, Pedro de, *see* Benedict XIII
 Luther, Martin, 94, 155, 160, 164
- Machiavelli, Niccolò, 14, 88, 141, 240, 272,
 279, 281–82, 289–90
 Macrobius, 107, 186, 206–07
 Maggini, Francesco, 53
magister, 24–25, 32, 130–31; role of, 130–31
magistri (Paduan), Arsegino, Domenico,
 Johannes da Coreda, Luchiesio, Morando,
 Paduano, Rolandino, Zunta 24–25
 Malatesta, Baptista, 122–23
 Manetti, Giannozzo, 108, 226, 236
 Mansor, king of Persia, 86
 Manuzio, Aldo (Manutius, Aldus), 164,
 169, 244, 251–52
 Marguerite of Navarre, 201
 Marsilius of Padua, 119
 Martial, 38, 172
 Martianus Capella, 101
 Matteo dei Libri, 33, 52
 Matthew of Vendôme, 42
 Maximilian I, Emperor, 160
 Mayfredo di Belmonte, 48
 McKeon, Richard, 21–22
 McManamon, John, 279
 McNeely, Trevor, 211
media tempestas, 112
 Medici family, 243, 270, 273, 278–79, 281,
 283, 285; Cosimo de', 107, 151, 268–69;
 Giovanni de' (Pope Leo X), 164, 169;
 Giuliano de', 279; Lorenzo de', 151, 163,
 245, 258, 270–71
 melancholy, 150; *see also* Chapter 90 of
 Poliziano's *Miscellanea*
 Melanchthon, Philipp, 155, 164, 196
 Mercury, 108
 Merula, Giorgio, 248
 Michaud-Quantin, Pierre, 113
 Michelozzi, Niccolò, 276
 Middle Ages, 1–2, 4–6, 8, 13, 16, 48, 75–77,
 80, 83, 86, 98, 110, 112–13, 137–38, 217,
 241; French Middle Ages, 241
 Milan, 9–10, 41, 60–61, 71, 97
mimesis, 209, 280
 Minerva, 56

- Mino da Colle, 31
 Miscomini, Antonio, 252
moderna tempora, 102
 Mohammed, 141, 148
 Momigliano, Arnaldo, 7, 128
 Monfasani, John, 13, 243
 Montaigne, Michel de, 141
 Morando, *see magistri*
 More, Thomas, 50, 90, 118, 123, 128, 141,
 144–45, 148, 155, 168–69, 201, 205,
 209–10, 212
 Moses, 147–48
 Mosse, George L., 80 n. 20
 Mount Oeta, 244, 260
 Mount Ventoux, 234
 Mueller, F. Max, 143
 Muret, Jean, 100
 Musaeus, 120
 Muses of Ausonia, 265
 Muses of Heliconia, 265
 Mussato, Albertino, 22, 24, 38, 52, 54, 119–
 22, 217, 221–22, 225–26, 231, 236
 Mythra, 144
- Naples, 41, 62, 71, 97, 273, 283
 Nature, 274, 287; Adrian's view of, 281,
 283–86, 289; consists of, 280; with
 Fortune and God, 279; Machiavelli's
 notion of, 289; universal law of, 271
 Nauert, Charles, 76, 155
 Nelli, Francesco, 234, 238
 neo-Durkheimian, 149
 Netherlands, 175, 179
 New Testament, 76, 82, 92, 271; Erasmus'
 edition and publication of, 174, 179–80;
 Valla's annotations on, 82, 92, 179; *see*
also Bible
 Nicholas V, Pope (Tommaso Parentucelli),
 97, 105–11
 Nordström, Johan, 5
 Novati, Francesco, 37
 Numa Pompilius, 148
- Oberlin College, 14, 16
 Ockham, William, 120
 Ong, Walter J., 204
 orations, defined, 53, 203
 Orazio Romano, 105
 Origen, 178
 Orphism, 141, 143, 148
 Orsini, Giordano, Cardinal, 99
 orthodoxy (Christian), 101, 103, 267–268,
 271, 290; and Raffaello Franceschi, 290;
 threatened by Lucretius' thought, 268, 288
- Otto of Freising, 41
 Ottone, 28
 Ovid, 42, 44, 47, 58–62, 64–68, 70, 101, 159,
 172, 200, 267
 Oxford University, 41, 62, 143, 169–71
- Padua, 24, 26–27, 32, 34–35, 41, 54, 84, 97,
 114–15, 119, 121, 169, 217, 236, 270
 Paduano, *see magistri*
 paganism, 74, 140–42, 146, 267, 277; and
 Christian theology, 141; and religious
 diversity, 142–43
paideia, 113, 188
 Panofsky, Ervin, 76
 Paolo Camaldolese, 40
 papal library, 98–100, 103, 107–10; opened
 to the scholarly community (1475), 98,
 109; and Pope Benedict XIII, 100–02,
 109; and Pope Nicholas V, 105–09; today
 called Vatican, 98
 Paris, 48, 131, 163, 166–68, 173, 176–77,
 184
 Passaggeri, Rolandino, 33
 Pastor, Ludwig von, 74
 Patrizi da Cherso (of Cherso), Francesco 89,
 140, 146
 Parentucelli, Tommaso, *see* Nicholas V
 Paul II, Pope, 97, 110
 Paul, Saint, 169, 171–72, 178
 Paulus Venetus, 120
 Pavia, 161, 207
 Peñiscola, 100
 Peraldus, William, 55
 Perotti, Niccolò, 105, 109
 Persius, 69, 258
 Peter Lombard, 144
 Petrarch (Petrarca), Francesco, 3–4, 6–8, 18,
 35, 74, 78, 100–01, 104, 109, 113–16, 119,
 122, 124, 129–33, 135, 138, 156, 162, 183,
 200–01, 207, 215–42
 Petrus Helias, 47
 Philippist Lutherans, 94
 Piccolomini, Aeneas Sylvius (Enea Silvio),
see Pius II
 Pico della Mirandola, Giovanni, 140,
 143–44, 164–65, 171, 173, 211–12, 245,
 247, 249, 259, 267–68
 Pietro d'Abano, 119, 249, 261
 Pietro da Isolella da Cremona, 48
 Pietro da Noceto, 105
pisteis, 201
 Pius II, Pope (Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini),
 73, 97, 105–06
 Pizzinga, Jacopo, 221

- Platina, Bartolomeo, 109
 Plato, 89, 118, 147–49, 162, 173, 185, 200, 204–05, 246, 278
 Platonism (Renaissance), 141, 143, 246; in Ficino, 147–50; and religious concord, 145–46; and Thomas More, 144
 Platonists (Renaissance), 144, 291; pioneers of modern interfaith dialogue, 146–47
 Platter, Thomas, 199
 Pletho, 145
 Pliny, 56, 88–89, 100, 113, 186–87, 200, 206
 Plotinus, 144
 Pluto, 291
poeta theologus, 120
 poetic coronation (poet laureate), Mussato, 120–21, 225–26; Petrarch, 222, 238
 poetry, 22, 24, 35, 42–43, 49–50, 79, 115, 117, 123, 137, 159, 183, 206, 209, 220–23, 226–27, 232, 235, 237, 274; Mussato's defense of, 120–22; Petrarch's notion of, 116
 Poitiers, 163
 Polenton, Sicco, 225, 238
 Poliziano, Angelo, 18, 75, 169, 243–51, 272
 Polybius, 14
 Pompeius Trogus, 100
 Pomponazzi, Piero, 291
 Pontani, Filippomaria, 252
 Ponticus, 56
 Pozzi, Giovanni, 248
 primitivism, 273, 279, 288; and Adriani, 279–81, 290; and Machiavelli, 290
 printing press, French, 166; Roman, 110–11
 Priscian, 48, 81, 101
 Proclus, 144, 169
prosopographia, 202
prosopoeia, 202
 Prosper, 200
 Protestant Reformation, 93–95, 144–45, 155, 160, 174–75, 180
 Prudentius, 172
 pseudo-Aristotelian *Problemata*, 243, 249
 pseudo-Cicero, 40, 42, 45, 58, 70, 204
 pseudo-Dionysius, 169–70
 pseudo-Sallust, 58, 61
 Ptolemy, 100, 107–08
 Pulci, Luigi, 151, 270
 Putterham, George, 202
 Pyrrho, 269
 Pythagoras, 269, 278
 Quintilian, 45, 107, 183–85, 188, 200–02
 Rabanus Maurus, 113
 Rabelais, François, 201, 206, 208, 212
 Rainolde, Richard, 203
 Rahner, Karl, 144
 Ramus, Petrus, 195
 Ranieri da Reggio, 30, 35
ratio, 134, 187, 194, 255
ratio studiorum, 91 n. 40
 Ravenna, battle of, 284, 289
 Renaissance, attacks on, 77 and n. 12, 241
renovatio, 7–8, 215–16, 221–23, 225–28, 230, 237–39, 241–42; in Petrarch, 231–36; *see also* classical rebirth
 Reuchlin, Johann, 163–65
 Rhenanus, Beatus, 190, 199
 rhetoric, 6, 13–14, 21–29, 32–33, 35, 37, 39, 43–46, 48–49, 51–52, 76, 79–80, 91, 100, 122, 124, 127, 131, 134, 137, 161, 163, 183, 193–95, 201–04, 206, 211, 220, 223, 229, 231–32, 235; and dialectics, 194–95; and grammar, 183–85; keystone of the school curriculum, 201–04; the multifaceted function of, 201; role in literature, 201–05 *passim*; and science, 195–97
 rhetorical poetics and the art of triangulation, 208–09, 211–12; in Thomas More, 209–211
 Riccobaldo da Ferrara, 38, 52
 Richard III, king of England, 203
 Rinuccio Aretino, 109
 Rinuccio da Castiglione, 104
 Roffredo da Benevento, 41
 Rolandino, *see magistri*
 Rolando di Lovato, 54
 Rolando da Piazzola, 54
 Roman Empire, 170, 227–28, 233
Romanae antiquitates, 7, 233
 Rome, 7, 26, 39, 53, 55, 80, 83, 86, 88, 97–100, 102–04, 107, 110–12, 140, 156, 162, 164, 167, 222, 228, 231–34, 238, 240
 Ronconi, Giorgio, 119
 Ruggero di Marino da Firenze, 30
 Rustici, Cencio (dei), 99, 104
 Rutilius, 258
 Sabadino degli Arienti, Giovanni, 275
 Sabbadini, Remigio, 37, 185
 Sack of Rome (1527), 240
 Saitta, G., 119
 Salatiele, 33
 Sallust, 41, 44, 47, 53, 55, 58–59, 61–63, 66–70, 101, 107, 129, 166, 200, 217

- Salutati, Coluccio, 13, 22, 101, 120, 129, 133, 141, 200–01, 222–23, 236, 238
- Savonarola, Girolamo, 272–74, 276–77, 283
- Scala, Bartolomeo, 270–71, 289–90
- Schism, 100, 102–05
- Schönberger, Rolf, 130
- Scholasticism, 3, 13–18, 21, 75–78, 133, 219, 241; and the *auctoritates*, 131; nature of, 130–31; Petrarch's criticism of, 129–33; Valla's negative attitude toward, 82, 133–35
- Scipio Africanus, 234, 238, 258
- Scipione Forteguerri, 250
- secondary grammar curriculum, 183–84, 186–87, 189; in Baptista Guarino, 184–86; its method of reading and studying, 186–88; its rhetorical and moral intent, 188–9
- Seneca the Younger, 38, 42, 47, 100–01, 107, 159, 170, 179, 202, 204–05, 217, 231, 260, 267
- Servius, 81, 101
- Sicily, 258
- Sidney, Philip, 201, 204–05, 208–09, 212
- Silius Italicus, 107
- Sixtus IV, Pope (Francesco della Rovere), 97, 109–111, 248
- Skelton, John, 168
- Socrates, 147, 278
- Soderini, Piero, 290
- Soderini, Tommaso, 290
- Southern, R.W., 140
- Spain, 74, 105, 167, 180, 200
- Sparta, 163
- Spaventa, Bertrando, 3, 137
- Spitz, Lewis, 163
- Squarciafico, Girolamo, 235
- St. Omer, 178
- Statius, 47, 58, 60–62, 65, 70, 107
- Stefanardo di Vimercate, 43
- Stoicism, 144
- Stoics, 141, 205, 278
- Strasbourg, 171
- studia humanitatis*, 12, 135, 137, 159, 182, 227, 229, 235, 243; and Bruni, 223–24; defined, 79, 220
- Studium* of Bologna 27–35; Padua, 24–26; Rome, 103
- Sturm, Johann, 91 n. 40
- Sturm, Johannes, 196
- suasoriae*, 202
- Subiaco, 111
- Suetonius, 55–56, 107, 184
- Sulla, Lucius, 129
- superstitious religion, 276, 279, 288; Adriani's attack on, 272–73, 276–77, 282; Machiavelli's criticism of, 290; and Savonarola, 273–74, 276–77
- Switzerland, 174
- Symmachus, 258
- Symonds, John Addington, 3, 74
- Tacitus, 7, 160
- Taranto, 258
- Taylor, Charles, 149, 152
- Tebaldo di Bonaventura d'Amendola, 31
- Terence, 44, 58–59, 64, 107, 159
- Themistius, 248
- Thomas, Saint, *see* Aquinas
- Thomas of Cantimprè, 115
- Thomism, 268
- Thorndike, Lynn, 4, 15
- Thucydides, 107
- Tifernate, Gregorio, 109, 163, 167
- Tifernate, Lilio, 109
- Tindal, Matthew, 143
- Toffanin, Giuseppe, 4, 50
- Tommaso da Messina, 201
- Tortelli, Giovanni, 105, 108–09
- Trapezuntius, 201, 250, 256; *see also* George of Trebizond
- Traversari, Ambrogio, 269
- Trinkaus, Charles, 76
- Trithemius von Sponheim, Johannes, 167
- trivium*, 117, 201
- Tunstall, Cuthbert, 210
- Tuscany, 10, 41, 67, 138
- Ubertino of Carrara, 122
- Uguccione, 28 and n. 27
- Ullman, Berthold L., 6, 37
- universities, 49, 73, 79, 93, 95, 113, 130, 156–57, 173; French, 92; German, 92–93, 157, 159, 163; Italian, 49, 91, 156–57; Protestant, 94
- University of
Bologna, 44, 87, 119
Ferrara, 83, 161
Florence, 272, 291
Ingolstadt, 160
Padua, 85, 87, 119
Paris, 45, 117, 119, 123, 173, 175
Pavia, 91
Pisa, 79, 291
Wittenberg, 93
- Utopia and Utopians, 148, 203, 210; religious beliefs of, 144–45

- Valerius Maximus, 47, 107, 159, 166, 185–87
 Valla, Lorenzo, 75, 78, 80–83, 91–92, 94, 105, 109, 123–24, 133, 134 and n. 24, 135, 147, 166, 179, 227
 Vatican Library, 98, 250
 Vegetius, 100, 107
 Vegio, Maffeo, 105, 108
 Venerable Bede, 227
 Venice, 10, 41, 69, 71, 84, 97, 228, 244, 252
 Venus, 277
 Vercelli, 48
 Verde, Armando, 272
 Vergerio, Pier Paolo, 104, 120, 122–23, 227, 237
 Verona, 41, 200, 217
 Vesalius, Andreas, 84–88
 Vespasiano da Bisticci, 108
 Vettori, Francesco, 289
 Vicenza, 30, 42
 Vienna, 161
 Villani, Filippo, 129
 Vincent of Beauvais, 113, 115–16, 129
 Virgil (Vergil), 12, 42, 44, 47, 58–64, 66–67, 69–70, 107, 121, 172, 200, 231, 234–35, 238, 278
 Visconti, Giangaleazzo, 9
 Vitrier, Jean, 178
 Vitruvius, 113
 Vittorino da Feltre, 120
 Voigt, Georg, 1–2, 73–74
 Walter of Châtillon, 42
 Wanderpoeten, 159, 161
 Ward, John, 51
 Warham, William, 177
 Weisinger, Herbert, 6
 Weiss, Roberto, 7, 22, 37, 39, 216–19, 221, 231, 237, 241
 William, bishop of Lucca, 42
 William of Conches, 47, 55
 William of St. Amour, 123
 Wimpfeling, Jakob, 167, 170–71
 Witt, Ronald G. 21, 38–40, 41 n. 17, 47, 119 and n. 5, 128, 137–38, 182, 220–21, 231, 241
 Wittenberg, 164
 Wolters, Al, 246
 Xenophon, 107
 Zambono d'Andrea, 54
 Zeuxis of Heraclea, 206
 Zika, Charles, 165
 Zoroaster, 145
 Zoroastrianism, 142–43, 145, 148
 Zunta, *see magistri*
 Zwingli, Ulrich, 94, 199

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